

Don't Let Go

Created by Ty Robinson

Chapter 3 - Gregoria Arc



*Myrlinda is writing a letter to her father.*

**Myrlinda:** (Dear father, we've just obtained a mail bird so now we can send and receive letters from you. His name is Hegru. We got him as a gift from the mayor of Barogia, which was under the rule of an evil man named King Krogur, until Cheese Head took care of him anyway. Cheese Head and the rest of us are having a very good time travelling together. He tries to hide it, but I don't think Ryven's ever been this happy in his life. We also have a new member onboard. Her name is Serah. She and her sisters gave the evacuation pod a lovely new paintjob and a deck to make it look like a real airship. They also named the vessel the Loving Dolphin. Ryven doesn't like it much, of course. I get this weird fluffy feeling whenever Serah and I are alone together and I don't know exactly what to do about it. Nobody else on the ship understands that kind of stuff. Anyway, we all send you our best regards. I love you dad, Myrlinda.)

*Myrlinda gets up to give the letter to Hegru out on the deck.*

**Myrlinda:** Here you go, Hegru. Thank you. Do you guys have anything else to mail?

**Ryven:** Yeah, this is for dad, too.

**Serah:** I wrote to my sisters as well.

*They hand Myrlinda the letters.*

**Myrlinda:** Cheese Head, are you sure you don't have anyone to write a letter to?

**Cheese Head:** Yeah, I'm fine. Send them away!

**Myrlinda:** Okay, then.

**Serah:** I don't want to be rude and ask him about it.

**Myrlinda:** Yeah, me neither. Okay, Hegru. That's everything. Thanks.

*Hegru flies off with the letters. Later the crew enjoys dinner. McGuven walks in with what he's cooked for the crew.*

**McGuven:** We're making excellent progress. We might get there a bit ahead of schedule.

**Cheese Head:** Alright! That's great!

**Serah:** That's good news!

**McGuven:** I made us all some very nutritious vegetable soup.

*McGuven hands out the plates.*

**Serah:** It looks great!

**Myrlinda:** You mean it's just vegetables? Like there's no meat in it or anything?

**McGuven:** Well we can't eat meat all the time. We need other things in our diets, too.

**Myrlinda:** Well I'm gonna need a lot more of this soup to fill up if it's all just a bunch of leaves and crap.

**McGuven:** I can always give you more after you finish that bowl.

*Cheese Head is playing with his milk like he did in Astalia.*

**Serah:** Does he need to do that for his body, or is he just playing with his food?

**Ryven:** He's just goofing around.

**Myrlinda:** Serah, I've been meaning to ask, why are you looking for Lieutenant Barrenson, and how do you know he'll be in Gregoria?

**Serah:** I simply have a favor to return to him from when I lived there, that's all.

**Ryven:** You realize Cheese Head's going over there to kick his ass, right?

**Serah:** That's fine. I don't have a problem with that.

**Myrlinda:** What kind of a relationship do you have to him?

**Serah:** It's... complicated. I'd rather not talk about it.

**Cheese Head:** Hey, Serah... Krogur told me what you've been through.

**Serah:** What? What do you mean?

**Cheese Head:** He wasn't very specific about things, but I do know why you left Gregoria. He's your father, isn't he?

**Serah:** No, my father passed away...

**Cheese Head:** Is he your family at all?

**Serah:** It's not any of your business, Cheese Head!

**Cheese Head:** But why not? We're friends, aren't we?

**Serah:** That doesn't mean anything! It's still my business and my business alone!

**Cheese Head:** That's a load of crap.

**Myrlinda:** Cheese Head, it is kind of rude to demand information from someone like that.

**Cheese Head:** I don't care if it's rude or not. I don't want you to end up doing anything stupid. If you have a problem that's bothering you, you need to tell us.

**Serah:** I don't need to tell you anything! I don't want any of you to know about it!

**Cheese Head:** Know about what?

**Serah:** I've finished eating. I'm going to bed now.

*Serah gets up and leaves.*

**Ryven:** Nice going, ass.

**Cheese Head:** There's something wrong with my friend and I want to help!

**Myrlinda:** Well sometimes people aren't so willing to talk about things, Cheese Head, especially when you confront them directly like that. Sometimes you just have to wait for the

right time.

**Cheese Head:** What if there's never a right time and something bad happens?

**Myrlinda:** I know you're just concerned for her, but you can't push her. You have to let her talk about it when she wants to.

**Ryven:** It's weird. She's never really struck me as the troubled type...

**McGuven:** Serah does seem to be calm and collected nearly all of the time.

**Myrlinda:** Those are the kinds of people who are vulnerable the most. You never see it coming because they hide it really well.

**Cheese Head:** Hmm...

**Myrlinda:** I'm gonna go check on her.

*Myrlinda goes to the bedroom. Serah is lying in her bed.*

**Myrlinda:** Hey.

**Serah:** Leave me alone.

**Myrlinda:** Don't worry. I'm not here to talk about that. I just wanted to apologize for Cheese Head being so rude. He doesn't really know any better.

**Serah:** It's fine. I just want some privacy.

**Myrlinda:** I just want to make sure you're okay.

**Serah:** I'm fine, dear. I just need some sleep.

**Myrlinda:** Okay, just let us know if you need anything.

*Myrlinda goes back to the dining hall.*

**McGuven:** How is she?

**Myrlinda:** She says she's fine.

**Cheese Head:** And we all know that's a lie... This bites! I want to do something!

**Myrlinda:** I understand, but you just have to do what you can, when you can.

**Ryven:** It's a shame, but that's how it is, Cheese Head. You just have to accept it.

**Cheese Head:** Awww... I think I might cry!

*Streams of tears flow from Cheese Head's eyes.*

**McGuven:** We'll all feel better come tomorrow morning.

**Myrlinda:** I'd feel better if I wasn't starving. McGuven, can I please have some more soup?

**McGuven:** Of course. I said you could after all.

*McGuven brings Myrlinda more soup.*

**Ryven:** So has it sunk in with any of you guys that we're about to fight a Lieutenant? Until Cheese Head came around, nobody had ever even defeated a Sergeant Major.

**Cheese Head:** I'm gonna kick that guy's ass!

**Myrlinda:** It is kind of scary to think about. Sergeant Major Snare and King Krogur must be complete jokes when compared to any of the Lieutenants.

**Cheese Head:** Big deal! I'll beat him no matter how strong he is! Nothing is going to stop my dream!

**Myrlinda:** Your dream?

**Cheese Head:** Yeah, world peace!

**Myrlinda:** Oh, of course.

**Cheese Head:** Nothing can stop somebody who has a dream to fight for!

**Ryven:** You sound like a stupid little kid when you say that.

**Cheese Head:** Yeah, I know, but I don't care what anyone says. I have a dream, and I'm going

to fight for it. Nobody's going to get in my way to bring world peace. Don't you have a dream to fight for, Ryven?

**Ryven:** Yeah, I suppose I do. One day, I want to be the greatest swordsman in the world. I want to defeat anybody who dares to call them self a master of sword fighting.

**Cheese Head:** And you fight for that dream, right? You're not even willing to let death stop you from accomplishing your goal?

**Ryven:** That's right. No one's going to stop me from being the world's greatest swordsman.

**Cheese Head:** So you understand.

**Ryven:** Yeah, I guess you're right, Cheese Head. I guess dreams really are a powerful thing.

**Cheese Head:** Haha! I told you so!

**Myrlinda:** McGuven, could I have just one more bowl? I'm still feeling a little hungry.

**McGuven:** No problem.

*McGuven gets up and returns with more soup.*

**Cheese Head:** So what are your dreams, Myrlinda?

**Myrlinda:** Huh? My dreams? Well... I've thought about it and I've decided that what I want to do is become strong. I want to be able to fight against any odds that are put up against me, so that way I can never lose anybody that I care about. That's what my dream is.

**Ryven:** Sounds like a damn good dream, sis!

**Cheese Head:** Yeah! It's a wonderful dream!

**Myrlinda:** Yeah... I guess you're right!

*The three of them become very cheerful, almost as if they're in a celebratory mood.*

**Cheese Head:** Hey, McGuven! What's yours?

**McGuven:** That's quite simple! I want to create a world built around justice! That is what I seek!

**Myrlinda:** Alright!

**Ryven:** Yeah!

**Cheese Head:** This is fantastic! We're all gonna make our dreams come true together!

**Crew:** Yeah!

*Serah can overhear the conversation in the room above.*

**Serah:** (These people... they really are something. Something precious...)

*Serah gets out of bed and returns to the dining hall. Everyone becomes quiet when she enters.*

**Serah:** I have a dream, too...

**Myrlinda:** Serah?

**Serah:** I want to create a world where everyone has a place to call home.

**Cheese Head:** That's great, Serah!

**Myrlinda:** Yeah, that's a really good thing.

**Ryven:** I can dig it!

**McGuven:** It's an excellent dream!

**Serah:** You think so?

**Cheese Head:** Of course! Sit down and celebrate with us all! One day we're going to make all of our dreams come true!

**Serah:** I'm sure we will.

*Serah sits down and the celebration recommences. Eventually, they all go to sleep. Then morning arrives. The crew, minus Cheese Head and McGuven, is asleep in the bedroom. Cheese*



*Head barges in, followed by McGuven.*

**Cheese Head:** Good morning, crewmates! It's 9 o' clock! C'mon, it's time for another adventure!

**Ryven:** But we can't be there yet, we just left yesterday!

**Cheese Head:** Every day is an adventure! C'mon guys, get up! I wanna have fun!

**Serah:** Well you certainly are a morning person, Cheese Head.

*Myrlinda yawns.*

**Myrlinda:** I hate mornings.

**McGuven:** I was always raised under the saying "the early bird gets the worm." Hahaha, get it guys?

*Cheese Head laughs and Serah chuckles, while Ryven and Myrlinda moan.*

**Cheese Head:** Now everyone out to the deck! I've got a surprise for you!

**Ryven:** A surprise? Oh great...

**Serah:** Sounds like fun!

**McGuven:** I was thinking the same thing.

**Myrlinda:** Ugh, do I have to?

**Cheese Head:** There's food out there, too.

**Myrlinda:** Did you say food!?

**Cheese Head:** Yep.

**Myrlinda:** Well what are we waiting for!? Let's go to the deck!

*The crew goes to the deck to find the ship parked right next to an oasis.*

**Cheese Head:** I thought we could have a little fun at this oasis here. It's not like we're in any

hurry. We can do whatever we want, when we want! We have our own time schedule!

**Serah:** I guess you're right. Sounds like fun to me.

**Myrlinda:** Awesome! I've wanted to go swimming for a while but dad never had the time to take us to an oasis or a pool! I'm gonna go change into my bathing suit!

**Ryven:** I could use some sun.

**Cheese Head:** McGuven, do you have the barbeque ready?

**McGuven:** I've just started up the grill!

**Ryven:** A grill and lawn chairs? Where'd we get those?

**Cheese Head:** They were in the closet at the back of the bedroom. I think Kobayoto gave them to us as a gift. When I found them, I decided we should try 'em out!

**Ryven:** Anything else in the closet there? It was empty when we first got it, right?

**Cheese Head:** Yeah, it was empty, but Kobayoto filled it with this grill, lawn chairs, a metal bin for bonfires, and a trampoline!

**McGuven:** He probably gave us all this because of the all the fun we had at the party before we left.

**Ryven:** That old man is one cool dude! Now if you'll all excuse me, I have a lawn chair to relax on and get some sun with.

*Ryven hops off the ship and sits on one of the lawn chairs.*

**Serah:** I've always wanted to build a sandcastle, but I don't really know how to.

**McGuven:** Well I'm sure we can figure it out together! I've never done such a thing either!

**Cheese Head:** I'm going to have my fun on the trampoline! Hahaha!

**Myrlinda:** Desert oasis, here I come!

*Myrlinda walks out onto the sand in her swimsuit. Serah is love-stricken.*

**Serah:** Well hello, gorgeous!

**Myrlinda:** What'cha guys doing?

*Myrlinda looks down at the pathetic mound of sand they've created.*

**McGoven:** We're trying to make a sandcastle.

*Myrlinda stares at the mound of sand shocked.*

**Myrlinda:** Um, you guys look like you could use some help.

*Myrlinda sits down to aid them in their sandcastle creation.*

**Serah:** (I just can't take my eyes off of her! Her skin is so smooth and sexy! I think I'm gonna melt just staring at her!)

**Myrlinda:** What's wrong, Serah?

**Serah:** N-Nothing! I was just... daydreaming! Yeah, daydreaming!

**Myrlinda:** Well okay then...

*Myrlinda bends forward, giving Serah full view of Myrlinda's chest.*

**Serah:** (I can't take it anymore! I'm going to die at this rate! Not only is that little heart of hers perfect but so is the rest of her body! I have to marry this woman or I don't know if I'll be able to continue living!)

*Serah faints and falls backward.*

**Myrlinda:** Serah! Are you okay!?

**Serah:** I'm doing fantastic... I've just never seen a woman so beautiful before...

*Myrlinda blushes.*

**Myrlinda:** Huh? What do you mean?

*Serah recollects herself.*

**Serah:** Oh, I just kind of spaced out for a second.

**Myrlinda:** Why are you acting so weird? And what are you staring at?

*Myrlinda follows Serah's gaze to her chest and is surprised.*

**Myrlinda:** Are you serious!?

**Serah:** I'm sorry... Your body is just too gorgeous not to look at...

*Myrlinda blushes again.*

**Myrlinda:** You're just too much to handle some times.

*The two become aware of McGuven's presence again.*

**Myrlinda:** So how about that sandcastle?

**McGuven:** Yes, please.

*Cheese Head dismounts from the trampoline and relaxes on a lawn chair.*

**Cheese Head:** Aren't you too hot in all that clothing? Couldn't you at least put on some shorts?

**Ryven:** Nah, I'm fine.

**Cheese Head:** Alrighty then. I'm gonna get some sun, too. Hey, Serah! How's that sandcastle going?

**Myrlinda:** It's going great!

*The three stand to reveal their mighty finished sandcastle.*

**Cheese Head:** Whoa! That's awesome!

**Serah:** Isn't it? Thanks for the help, you two.

**McGuven:** Certainly!

**Myrlinda:** Of course! Now if you don't mind, I'm going for a swim before the food is ready!

**Serah:** Have fun, beautiful. I'm not too fond of swimming.

**Myrlinda:** I will!

*Myrlinda heads to the oasis, while Serah sits on a lawn chair and McGuven tends to the grill.*

**Cheese Head:** Serah... I'm sorry about yesterday. You have every right to be mad at me. I was a big jerk and you haven't even said anything about it since. You just let it go even though you had every right to yell at me for it.

**Serah:** It's okay, Cheese Head. I forgive you. I could never stay mad at someone with a blessed little heart like yours!

*Cheese Head begins to tear up.*

**Cheese Head:** Really?

**Serah:** Of course! We're friends, aren't we?

*Cheese Head starts crying.*

**Cheese Head:** Of course! I'm so happy to hear that! So happy that I can't stop crying!

**Serah:** (I don't know quite what it is, but something about these people makes me feel like none of my troubles matter... But I still have to take care of what I left for in the first place. I have to finally put an end to it.)

**McGuven:** The barbeque is done!

**Ryven:** Alright! Let's eat!

**Serah:** It smells amazing, McGuven!

**McGuven:** My father taught me how to cook. I had to feed an entire military base, so it's not only important that the food tastes good, but I also had to make sure the soldiers got all the nutrients they needed!

**Serah:** We're very lucky to have a cook as talented as you around!

**McGuven:** Oh, I'm an okay cook!

*McGuven hands Ryven and Serah plates of food. Myrlinda's head surfaces from the water.*

**Myrlinda:** Did someone say food!?

**Cheese Head:** Yeah, the barbeque is done!

**Myrlinda:** Alright!

*Myrlinda gets out of the lake, grabs a plate of meat, and sits on a lawn chair.*

**Myrlinda:** This smells amazing, McGuven! My mouth's watering and I haven't even started eating yet!

*Myrlinda eats a piece of the barbequed meat.*

**Myrlinda:** This is the best food I've ever eaten!

*Myrlinda swoons in her chair.*

**McGuven:** Well I wouldn't say it's that good! I'm not a professional chef or anything!

**Serah:** Are you sure about that? This tastes really good!

**Ryven:** Yeah, McGuven, this is high-quality food you've made.

**McGuven:** Oh, you're all embarrassing me, really!

**Myrlinda:** I could eat this nonstop for the rest of my life... Please tell me there's more than one plate for each of us!

**McGuven:** Of course there is.

*Myrlinda swoons again.*

**Myrlinda:** I've died and gone to heaven...

*They all finish their food.*

**Serah:** That was excellent!

**Ryven:** Yeah!

**Myrlinda:** Words... I can't even think of the words to describe how I feel right now... I must have more! I think I might die if I don't get more!

**McGuven:** You're all far too kind!

*McGuven gives Myrlinda another plate of food.*

**Ryven:** So where do you think it all goes?

**Serah:** Excuse me?

**Ryven:** All that food. It's like it just vanishes into a black hole or something.

**Serah:** It probably goes into that blessed little spirit of hers. A strong woman like that is bound to have a strong appetite.

*Myrlinda sighs excitedly as she eats.*

**Serah:** So how would you feel if I married your sister?

**Ryven:** What!?

**Serah:** I was just asking. How would you feel?

**Ryven:** I don't know! I don't understand any of that relationship crap!

**Serah:** Really?

**Ryven:** Really. It's all up to whatever she wants.

**Serah:** Well that's good then. Don't say anything to her about it.

**Ryven:** Sure. I really wouldn't want to anyway.

**Serah:** Looks like she's all mine then!

*Myrlinda finishes her second helping.*

**Myrlinda:** So good... please tell me there's still more.

**McGuven:** There's just one more for you.

**Myrlinda:** Yes...

*Myrlinda starts eating the last piece of meat. Serah scoots her lawn chair next to Myrlinda's.*

**Serah:** Hello, dear.

**Myrlinda:** Hey.

**Serah:** You sure are enjoying yourself there.

**Myrlinda:** Mhm!

**Serah:** Did I ever tell you how beautiful you are when you're happy?

*Serah gulps her food and blushes.*

**Myrlinda:** No...

**Serah:** Well let's just say you're hard to resist being near.

*Myrlinda's face turns red.*

**Myrlinda:** Really?

**Serah:** Definitely.

**Myrlinda:** Hehehe...

*Myrlinda finishes her food.*

**Myrlinda:** I'm stuffed! Today is the best day in my entire life...

**Cheese Head:** I think we've had a pretty good time here. Let's say we get back to the Loving Dolphin and head for Gregoria.

**Myrlinda:** Aw, do we have to?

**Cheese Head:** Well you can't go swimming anymore after eating all that, so there's really not



much left to do.

**Myrlinda:** Okay...

*They all start to pack up.*

**Cheese Head:** Oh, I almost forgot! Everyone wait right here.

*Cheese Head runs into the ship and returns with a camera and a stand.*

**Cheese Head:** The old man also gave us a camera! Now we can take pictures on all the adventures we go on!

**Myrlinda:** That's great!

**Cheese Head:** All of you stand over there and I'll set this thing up.

*They assemble together and all smile.*

**Cheese Head:** Set it to 5 pictures, 5 seconds after I press go.

*Cheese Head presses the button on the camera and runs over to the crew.*

**Cheese Head:** I've got to time this just right. Everyone give me your best smile!

*Cheese Head jumps in the air just before the picture is captured, making the top of his head as high as everyone else's chest.*

**Cheese Head:** Perfect!

*The camera spits out 5 identical images.*

**Ryven:** That's got to be a pretty expensive camera. For a camera to take 5 identical pictures like that, it's got to take them all within fractions of a second.

**Cheese Head:** You mean it didn't just print the same image 5 times?

**Ryven:** That's not how cameras work, you dummy! A camera uses light to record photographs onto a special kind of film. It's not magic. It doesn't just remember the picture and print it as

many times as you want. We really owe the old man for all this stuff.

**Myrlinda:** Yeah, we really do.

**Serah:** I'll go put all these photos in some protective plastic.

**Cheese Head:** Alright then, let's pack up and head back to the ship!

They all board the ship.

**Myrlinda:** I guess I'll change back into some real clothes then.

**Serah:** But you look so amazing! Why change!?

**Myrlinda:** I can't wear a swimsuit if I'm not at a beach or something!

**Serah:** Aw...

*Myrlinda goes to the bathroom at the front of the bedroom to change. Serah is peaking at her while she changes.*

**Ryven:** Are you peaking on my sister!?

*Serah turns around.*

**Serah:** N-No! Of course not!

*Silence.*

**Serah:** Well, I've got to go!

*Serah runs out of the bedroom.*

**Ryven:** Get back here, you pervert!

*Ryven chases her. Myrlinda exits the bathroom.*

**Myrlinda:** What was all that commotion about?

*Ryven chases Serah across the deck. The day turns to night and the heroes all meet on the deck.*

**Cheese Head:** Well guys, we'll be in Gregoria by tomorrow morning.

**Ryven:** Good, I'm itching for a decent fight!

**McGuven:** We're just another step closer to justice!

**Myrlinda:** And I'm gonna get stronger!

**Cheese Head:** You ready for this, Serah?

**Serah:** I've been waiting my whole life for this moment.

**Cheese Head:** Great! Let's get ready for our greatest adventure yet!

*The heroes all go to sleep.*

**Serah:** (Well, this is it. I'll finally be able to get my life back. All of my pain and suffering will finally come to an end. It's hard to sleep like this. My head is rushing through everything that's happened so far. It's so hard to believe that I'm finally going to get some closure. Maybe I'll clear my head if I get some fresh air.)

*Serah goes to the deck and looks up at the sky.*

**Cheese Head:** Can't sleep, huh?

**Serah:** I thought some fresh air might help. Why are you awake?

*Cheese Head sits on the deck railing.*

**Cheese Head:** A cheese man like me doesn't need that much sleep. So what's buggin' ya? I mean, how can I help you get to sleep?

*Pause.*

**Serah:** He's my stepfather.

**Cheese Head:** Oh. So he and your mom?

**Serah:** Yes, that's what Krogur was talking about.

**Cheese Head:** I promise, Serah, no matter what happens there, I'm not going to let anything

happen to you.

**Serah:** Thanks, I appreciate it.

**Cheese Head:** Is there any reason they beat you up?

**Serah:** I don't want to talk about that.

**Cheese Head:** That's fine.

**Serah:** Why did you let me board your ship?

**Cheese Head:** A whole bunch of reasons! It was your sisters who rebuilt our ship, you're really strong, you have awesome powers, and most importantly, I knew you'd make an amazing friend!

**Serah:** Based on what? The time when we bashed our heads together until we both nearly died?

**Cheese Head:** I didn't need to base it off anything. I just knew we'd make good friends.

**Serah:** You really are something Cheese Head.

**Cheese Head:** Plus I knew Myrlinda already liked you, so I knew I would, too!

**Serah:** Oh, really? She likes me, huh?

**Cheese Head:** She did tend to your wounds, right?

**Serah:** Mhm. She's just the sweetest.

**Cheese Head:** Think you'll be able to sleep now?

**Serah:** I'm sure of it.

**Cheese Head:** Good! I'm very glad!

*Cheese Head hugs Serah.*

**Serah:** You're just too adorable. Good night, I'll see you in the morning.

**Cheese Head:** Sleep well!

*Serah goes back to bed, while Cheese Head enjoys the view of the night sky. Morning comes and*

*the ship lands in Gregoria. The crew meets on the deck.*

**Cheese Head:** Alright, crew! We've officially landed in Gregoria! Let's find that Lieutenant guy and kick his ass!

**All:** Alright!

**Serah:** (We're finally here.)

*They disembark and head into town. Commotion stirs as the crew walks around.*

**Man 1:** It's the Cheese Heads!

**Woman 1:** They're here in Gregoria!

**Woman 2:** What are they doing here!?

**Man 2:** Somebody contact the government before they destroy the town and kill us all!

**Serah:** Looks like we're famous here.

**Ryven:** Guess those bounties are finally working.

**Myrlinda:** You know maybe walking head first into a town as wanted criminals wasn't such a great idea.

**Cheese Head:** Well how else are we gonna find this Lieutenant guy?

*A horde of soldiers surround the crew at an intersection of the walkways.*

**Soldier:** Stop right there, Cheese Heads! You're all under arrest! Surrender and make no attempts to resist, otherwise we'll shoot!

**Cheese Head:** It's just like the good old times in Astalia, constantly being bombarded by hordes of endless Privates.

**Myrlinda:** It sure brings back memories.

**Ryven:** I've been waiting for this!

**Serah:** This'll certainly be fun.

**McGuven:** Definitely.

**Man:** Wait just a second!

*A mysterious man is standing on top of a tall building.*

**Man 1:** Who is that? Could it be him?

**Woman 1:** It is! It's him!

**Woman 2:** The legendary hero of this town!

**Man 2:** It's Chess! He's gonna put a stop to the Cheese Head criminals!

**Soldier:** Chess, you no longer have any position in the government's ranks! It's the job of the government to fight criminals, not civilians!

**Chess:** Who ever said anything about fighting criminals?

*Chess drops down from the tall building he stood on with a mischievous grin. Suddenly the soldiers start shouting in pain and agony for what appears to be no reason. They all fall to the ground. The townspeople are shocked.*

**Woman 1:** But he- he just-

**Man 1:** He attacked all the soldiers!

**Woman 2:** Why would he do that!?

**Man 2:** This is really bad! Everybody get away from here!

*The townspeople all run away to their homes. The Cheese Heads prepare to fight.*

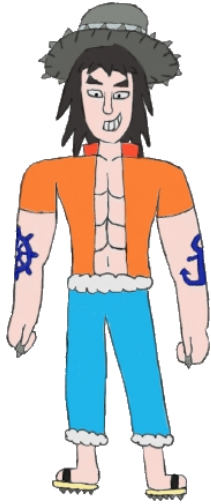
**Chess:** I've been waiting for you guys to get here.

*The crew all stare at him menacingly as his hat covers his face.*

**Chess:** I never thought I'd see a proper rebel union formed against the World Government in my

lifetime. I'm really glad I got the chance.

*Chess looks up with a big goofy grin.*



**Chess:** I want to join your crew!

*The crew collapse to the ground.*

**All:** You should have said so sooner!

**Myrlinda:** I was certain we were gonna have to fight you!

**Chess:** I'm sorry about that! To make it up to you, let's say we head to the finest restaurant in town! I'll even pay for the meal!

**Myrlinda:** Food!? And it's free!?

**Ryven:** Well, she's sold on him joining now...

**Chess:** Of course!

**Cheese Head:** Sounds fine to me! Let's go!

*They all meet up at the restaurant. There is less commotion about the Cheese Head's presence there.*

**Ryven:** These people don't seem to mind our presence here.

**Chess:** That's because they're all criminals, too! Nobody asks, nobody tells.

**Myrlinda:** So we're in a place home to thugs?

**Chess:** These people might not be of the most morally stable of lifestyles, but all the ones that keep returning to this store are good at heart, I promise! I've been coming to this place for a long time! Let me go order our food.

*Chess gets up to order food at the main counter.*

**Cheese Head:** I like this place.

**Serah:** There certainly is a warm and inviting atmosphere to it.

**McGoven:** Where there is alcohol, there is fun. Not that I would know. I don't drink.

**Cheese Head and Serah:** Me neither.

**Cheese Head:** Oh, well what a coinkedink!

*Chess returns.*

**Chess:** The food'll be here in a minute.

*An intimidating stranger walks into the store and up to the front counter.*

**Stranger:** Don't try anything funny, or I'll slaughter everyone in this restaurant.

*The stranger smirks with an evil grin and pulls out a gun, but the lady at the counter doesn't budge or show any fear. Chess gets up.*

**Chess:** Excuse me, sir. You must be new here.

**Stranger:** Yes, and you must be a fool to disobey my wishes. Do you know who I am?

**Chess:** I'm sure you think you're another hotshot criminal who thinks he's big and bad enough to rob this store of its greatest treasure.

**Stranger:** Yes, you're right. I'm here for the Golden Relic of Gregoria. Show me where it is!

**Chess:** Not a chance!



*Chess puts his hand on the robber's chest and he drops to the floor in agony. He then walks back to his table.*

**Ryven:** Incredible...

**McGuven:** Indeed...

**Serah:** That's amazing!

**Cheese Head:** You barely even touched him!

**Myrlinda:** What kind of a monster are you!?

**Chess:** Perhaps I should explain how I took out all of those soldiers and that unkind fellow on the floor over there. I possess the power to create and control electricity at will. I can send electric current through anything or anyone, including the air. On less powerful voltages, you can't even see the current coming. That's why it looked like I didn't even do anything and they just fell over.

**Cheese Head and McGuven:** That's so cool!

**Myrlinda:** I want to ask, how come everyone in town was calling you the legendary hero of Gregoria, and what was that Golden Relic that guy was talking about?

**Chess:** Well, whenever someone comes to this town with harmful intentions, I put them in their place, no matter who they are, criminal or government.

**Serah:** But doesn't that get you in trouble with the government?

**Chess:** I used to be a soldier of the World Government myself, a Sergeant. I get a little bit of a pardon whenever I have to stop some jackass Corporal from abusing the people. But government pardons are a thing of the past now that I'm a part of your crew. As for the Golden Relic of Gregoria, it's an ancient monolith that has been passed down for generations. Being made of

pure gold, it's seen as a grand treasure that many wish to steal, but those fools don't understand the relic's true value. It means more than gold and money. That relic is a symbol of hope and dreams, passed down by our ancestors in Gregoria for hundreds, maybe even thousands of years. How ironic now that its safety is in the hands of a bunch of petty thieves and criminals that inhabit this restaurant. It's my responsibility to protect not only that relic, but the people of this town... or I guess it used to be now that I'm joining your crew. The regulars in this little store will defend that relic with their lives. It's in good hands. I have faith in my friends.

**Ryven:** So why'd you leave the military, and why are you so interested in join our crew?

**Chess:** That's a long story.

**Cheese Head:** We're not in any hurry.

**Chess:** Well, if you insist. A couple of years ago, it was my responsibility to watch over the town of Gregoria as its Sergeant.

*Chess flashbacks to the day he resigned from the military. He is instructing soldiers at the top of a building.*

**Chess:** Nice job, men! That's enough training for today!

**Barrenson:** Hey, Chess, proud Sergeant of Gregoria! I have a preposition for you! How does a promotion sound?

**Chess:** A promotion sounds nice, but it sounds like you're asking me for something in return, Barrenson.

**Barrenson:** I need someone to be exiled.

*Barrenson hands Chess a wanted poster.*

**Chess:** Rattel Serah? She looks like she's just a child! Why do you want to exile a child!?

**Barrenson:** That child is a freak and a danger to those around it!

**Chess:** Rattel... That's your wife's name! You're exiling your own child from the city!? What the hell is wrong with you!?

*Barrenson grabs Chess by the throat.*

**Barrenson:** Listen to me, you worthless subordinate! If you don't have this devil exiled, I'll just get someone else to do it! You're testing my patience, now! I'm offering you the chance of a lifetime, now just take it!

**Chess:** Unhand me, you brute!

*Chess shocks Barrenson's hand.*

**Barrenson:** You... You runt! How dare you attack a Lieutenant! Do you want to lose your job!?

**Chess:** Take that offer... and shove it up your ass. I'm resigning... if this is what working for the government entails, then I'm not interested.

**Barrenson:** You've got quite some nerve, Chess! You think you're too good for this job!?

**Chess:** I'm tired of hearing all the horror stories of people being dragged away from their families for not being able to pay government fees. Anybody who opposes the government in protest or rebellion is exiled or executed. Now that your ugly mug is here to corrupt even my town with that crap, I'm finally abandoning this government altogether. You're out of your damn mind if you think I need to be a Sergeant just to protect these people.

**Barrenson:** You talk like a criminal! I have half a mind to turn you in to the government!

**Chess:** You can't lay a finger on me. So, if you'll excuse me, I have a girl to find before you or any of your men do.

*Chess jumps off the roof of the building*

**Barrenson:** Get back here you filthy rat! How dare you betray my orders! Chess!

*The flashback ends.*

**Chess:** But Barrenson's men got to her before me, and Serah was exiled. It makes me feel so sick. Barrenson is a special piece of crap. Ever since then, I've been hoping that one day this town will be safe enough for her to return to. I wanted to go looking for her, but I had to stay here to protect the town. I want to fight this corrupted government that hurts us all! I've just never had the opportunity! Every bone in my body is ready to bring the World Government crippling to its knees, but I've had to wait for the right moment, until now. You guys are a proper rebel union, tried and true! Now that I'm a part of your crew, I can finally put a stop to the World Government, and fulfill my wish that Serah will someday return to Gregoria!

*The rest of the Cheese Head crew all stares at Serah, who nonchalantly sips her drink.*

**Serah:** It looks like your wish came true.

**Chess:** What are you saying?

**Serah:** If you're looking for Rattel Serah, well then you've found her.

**Chess:** No way...

*Chess looks at Serah, and then pulls out the poster which he kept. He looks at the poster, then at Serah.*

**Chess:** You're Serah!? You're a part of the Cheese Heads!?

**Serah:** Yes. I joined with them just a few days ago after Cheese Head toppled Krogur Industries in Barogia. I'm sure you've heard of that.

**Chess:** Of course! So then you joined the Cheese Heads and came back to Gregoria with them?

**Serah:** Yes. I have some unfinished business that needs taking care of.

**Chess:** Barrenson?

**Serah:** Yes.

**Cheese Head:** I'm gonna kick that guy's ass!

**Chess:** I'm sure you will, captain.

**Ryven:** So this guy's officially a part of our crew now? Oh, who am I kidding, of course he is.

*Myrlinda grabs Ryven's cheek and pulls on it.*

**Myrlinda:** Quit complaining! He gave us free food!

**Chess:** So Serah, I've thought of a lot of questions over the years... Ever since the day I resigned, I never stopped thinking about your exile.

**Serah:** I'll try my best.

**Chess:** I appreciate it. So why in the world did Barrenson try to have you exiled?

**Serah:** Because he and my mother despise me. They wanted me to leave town because beating me to near death and kicking me out of the house wasn't enough.

**Chess:** What the hell is wrong with them!? Why would they beat their own kid like that!?

**Serah:** Well they didn't like it that I kissed a girl, but other than that, I couldn't tell you why...

**Myrlinda:** You mean you kissed some other girl?

**Serah:** I was just a teenager, dear. It was a long time ago.

**Chess:** Why would that even be a problem!? Jeese, I don't understand people sometimes... So is that why they kept calling you a freak?

**Serah:** I guess so...

**Chess:** That damn bastard... Cheese Head! I better get a good turn to punch that jackass around after you're done with him!

**Cheese Head:** Sure thing... Now I just wanna kick this guy's ass even more!

**Chess:** So Serah, where did you go? How was your life after being exiled?

**Serah:** I ran all the way to Barogia. I lived on the streets like I did after I was kicked out of the house, until King Krogur recruited me to Krogur Industries. He gave me a place to call home, but at a wicked price to the people of Barogia. It wasn't all bad though. I did find a family to call my own. The other members of Krogur Industries are all like sisters to me.

**Chess:** I'm glad to hear that. Everybody deserves some kind of place to call home.

**Serah:** I couldn't agree more!

*Chess gets up and slams his hand on the table.*

**Chess:** Well... what are we all waiting around for!? We've got a job to do!

**Cheese Head:** You're damn right! Let's get moving!

**Criminal 1:** Wait just a second! Do you really think you can leave... without all of us saying goodbye to you!?

**Criminal 2:** Yeah! You're like a role model to us all! How could you leave like that!?

**Chess:** Calm down, guys! I'd never leave without saying goodbye! I sure am gonna miss all of you guys! Think you can handle keeping this town and the relic safe?

**Criminals:** Yeah!

**Chess:** Alright, guys! Then this is it! It's finally the day I live out my dreams and fight for what I believe in! Farewell!

**Criminals:** Farewell!

**Criminal 1:** See ya, Chess!

**Criminal 2:** We're gonna miss you, too!

**Counter Lady:** You know you're always welcome. We can handle things while you're gone.

**Chess:** You better keep these guys in line! You're the closest thing they have to a leader now!

**Criminals:** You'll always be our leader, Chess!

**Counter Lady:** I think I can handle them.

**Chess:** Alright, guys. Let's go. Oh, hold up, I gotta pay the bill.

*Chess reads the bill.*

**Chess:** How many meals did you guys eat!?

**All, Except Myrlinda:** Just one.

**Myrlinda:** Only three.

**Chess:** What do you mean only three!? I can't pay for that!

**Counter Lady:** Got a problem there, Chess?

**Chess:** I was expecting to only have to pay for six meals, not eight. I'm a couple maroons short.

**Counter Lady:** Don't worry about it, Chess. It's on the house. You've more than earned it.

**Chess:** You're the greatest, Ashley! Okay, guys. Now we can go.

*They leave the restaurant, as the criminals cry and cheer. Chess holds his right fist up in the air while he walks away as a means of goodbye. The criminals hold their fists up, too.*

**Cheese Head:** It sure got emotional in there pretty quick.

**Chess:** Well those guys are my family, so it's no big surprise. They all act tough, but their hearts are as soft as they come.

**Cheese Head:** Well, welcome to the crew, Chess!

**Serah:** Yes, welcome!

**Myrlinda:** Thank you for the food! It was amazing!

**Chess:** Thanks, and it was no big deal.

**McGuven:** I'm glad to have you with us.

**Ryven:** Same here.

**Chess:** Thanks, guys. So what are our plans next? I have no idea where the Lieutenants are since they went into hiding, but I do know they are here in Gregoria. Barrenson and his wife show up around here all the time, we just have to look for them.

**Serah:** Guys, I haven't been here in a really long time. If you don't mind, there are a couple of places I'd like to check out... alone.

**Myrlinda:** Alone!? Are you insane!?

**Cheese Head:** Stay safe.

**Myrlinda:** You're letting her go!?

**Ryven:** I think you're forgetting that not every member of our crew has a bounty yet. Nobody's going to recognize her, not anyone in the government anyway. Just stay safe, Serah. Don't do anything stupid.

**Myrlinda:** Please don't get hurt, okay?

**Serah:** I'll be fine, I promise.

*Serah pats Cheese Head on the head.*

**Serah:** See you all later.

*Serah leaves.*

**Chess:** You sure she'll be fine, captain?

**Cheese Head:** I'm certain of it. Let's go look for that Barrenson asshole and make Serah proud!

*They walk off in a different direction, while Serah heads her own way.*



**Soldier:** I just saw you with the Cheese Head crew, am I not mistaken?

*Serah turns around to find a soldier behind her.*

**Soldier:** I don't recognize your face. You must be a new recruit. If you surrender now, you might be able to keep your life, since you don't have a bounty.

**Serah:** Fat chance.

*Serah pulls out her blades and swipes the soldier. She then runs off.*

**Soldier:** Agh! I need backup! I'm following a black-haired woman who's a new recruit of the Cheese Heads!

*Serah continues to run from military pursuit. She slices through them while gracefully dodging their attacks with little effort. A soldier cringes on the floor while Serah runs past him.*

**Soldier:** Somebody get that woman! She's with the Cheese Heads!

**Serah:** This isn't exactly how I wanted to enjoy my little trip down memory lane...

*She slashes a couple more soldiers and the darts into an alleyway, losing the soldiers. Serah eventually arrives at her destination, a house.*

**Serah:** (I seem to have lost them just in time. This is definitely her house. I remember it like it was yesterday.)

*Serah walks up the stairs and knocks on the door. A man answers the door.*

**Man:** Hello there. How can I help you?

**Serah:** Is Maryssa home?

**Man:** Honey, there's someone at the door for you!

*Maryssa walks to the door. She looks very similar to Myrlinda.*

**Maryssa:** Who is it?

*She sees Serah.*

**Maryssa:** No way... is that you, Serah?

**Serah:** It's me!

**Maryssa:** Well come in, please! It's been so long! I can't believe you came back!

*They sit on the couch and the man walks away.*

**Maryssa:** I'm so sorry... I never should have stopped talking to you. It wasn't your fault, I-

**Serah:** It's okay, Maryssa. Don't worry about that. I'm here now.

*Maryssa starts to cry and hugs Serah.*

**Maryssa:** I missed you so much! I never stopped thinking about what happened! I felt like I should have done something! I-

**Serah:** You did what you could do, stay safe. I missed you just as much, which is why I came back. Cheer up, okay?

**Maryssa:** Okay...

*Serah notices the diamond ring on Maryssa's finger.*

**Serah:** Now who is that for?

**Maryssa:** Oh, I'm a married woman!

**Serah:** Who's the lucky lady?

**Maryssa:** Oh, well, um...

*The man returns with drinks.*

**Man:** I brought some drinks for you two ladies.

**Maryssa:** Serah, this is my husband, Hanks.

**Hanks:** Hello, there. Pleased to meet ya.

**Serah:** Hello, nice to meet you, too.

*Serah shakes his hand, and he leaves.*

**Serah:** Well that was... unexpected.

**Maryssa:** Yeah, funny story, huh?

*Serah grabs Maryssa's hand and smiles at her.*

**Serah:** I'm very happy for you.

**Maryssa:** So how have you been, Serah?

**Serah:** I'm doing great. I'm traveling with a great group of friends, you might have heard of them.

**Maryssa:** Really, who are they?

**Serah:** They're called the Cheese Head Rebel Union for World Peace.

**Maryssa:** WHAT!?! YOU'RE WITH THE CHEESE HE-

*Serah puts her hand over Maryssa's mouth to quiet her.*

**Serah:** I wouldn't advise saying that out loud.

*Maryssa whispers.*

**Maryssa:** You're with the Cheese Heads!?

**Serah:** Mhm. It's the happiest experience I've had in a long time

**Maryssa:** But isn't that dangerous!?

**Serah:** I guess so, but that's not really new for me.

**Maryssa:** So what are they like?

**Serah:** Well there's Cheese Head. He's got the biggest heart you'll ever see in that cute tiny cheese body of his. There's a giant bird who can walk and talk like the rest of us. His name is

McGuven, and he's the most polite person you'll ever meet. As of a couple of minutes ago, the legendary hero of your town joined our crew.

**Maryssa:** You mean Chess!?

**Serah:** That's right. Says he's been waiting his whole life for a proper rebel union to join.

There's also a swordsman named Ryven. He acts tough, but he's as kind as the rest of them, deep down, and of course there's... the swordsman's sister.

**Maryssa:** Oh, is there?

**Serah:** Yes. Her name is Myrlinda and she's very beautiful, inside and out. She's a lot like you, actually. Blue hair, huge appetite, blushes easily.

*Maryssa blushes.*

**Maryssa:** Well why don't you just marry her?

**Serah:** That's the plan, someday!

**Maryssa:** So what happened after you got kicked out?

*Serah explains what happened, but eventually Serah must leave, so they part ways at the door.*

**Serah:** I wish I could stay for longer, but I've got a lot to do here. It was wonderful seeing you again!

**Maryssa:** I'll write to you, just like you said I could! I'm so glad I got to see you again!

*They hug and Maryssa starts sniffing.*

**Serah:** Take care, Maryssa.

**Maryssa:** You, too.

*Serah starts to walk away, but Maryssa grabs her by the shoulders, turns her around, and kisses her on the lips.*

**Maryssa:** It's been way too long since I had a kiss that good. Hanks is so... bleh.

**Serah:** Well I'm glad you enjoyed it. I'll see you later.

*Serah overhears Maryssa and Hanks talk inside.*

**Hanks:** Did you just kiss that girl!?

**Maryssa:** Well, um...

**Hanks:** That was so hot!

*A loud thump is heard, as well as a painful shout from Hanks. Maryssa walks upstairs.*

**Maryssa:** This is why I hate men! Ugh!

**Hanks:** Honey, I'm sorry!

**Maryssa:** I have some errands to do, just don't screw anything up until I get home!

*Serah chuckles as she walks away. Meanwhile, the other Cheese Heads walk around town.*

**Cheese Head:** So why does nobody know where this Barrenson guy is?

**Chess:** It's a real mystery. It's almost like they appear and disappear out of nowhere. There's rumors that somebody saw them walk through a tunnel that went underground once, but it's entirely speculation.

*Soldiers ambush the heroes.*

**Soldiers:** Halt! Chess, we've heard that you've been assisting the Cheese Head Rebel Union!

We're here to arrest you all!

**Chess:** This is great! These muscles have years of frustration and anger to let out. Better get started now!

*Chess cracks his knuckles.*

**Ryven:** I've been itching for a fight for a while.

**Cheese Head:** Sit out, Ryven. Let Chess handle this one.

**Ryven:** Why!?

**Cheese Head:** That guy needs a fight more than you do.

**Ryven:** Fine...

**Chess:** Electric Fist!

*Chess pounds his fist into a soldier's face as his arm sparks. The soldier flies into a horde and they all fall down. The crew runs through the streets as Chess punches and kicks soldiers. Chess then grabs his hat and flicks his wrist, causing the spikes to extend.*

**Chess:** Electric Star!

*He throws the hat as it sparks and slashes through a row of soldiers, and then returns to his hand. He puts his hat back on as they find themselves surrounded at a street intersection.*

**Chess:** Electric Current!

*Chess holds his hands out as soldiers begin shouting in pain. They all fall to the ground.*

**Chess:** Well that was disappointing. Let's keep looking for that Lieutenant.

*Meanwhile, Serah visits a rundown building.*

**Serah:** As tidy as ever, I see.

*Serah walks into the structure which visibly lacks any form of a door, flooring, or windows. Instead, holes are in the wall in place where there would be doors and windows. Many graves are scattered inside the structure. Serah sits down next to two.*

**Serah:** Hey, dad. Hello, doctor. I'm finally back. After all these years, I'm actually going to finish all of this. I miss you both, so much. I owe everything to you both. I certainly wouldn't be alive today if it weren't for the both of you... I should be headed off now, before someone finds

me here. I'll see you after it's finally over.

*Serah places flowers on the two graves and leaves. Meanwhile the Cheese Heads walk through the local market square.*

**Ryven:** This ain't half bad. Everyone's noticing you instead of us.

**Chess:** Good to know my little incident in public earlier didn't cause any distrust. They must have assumed those soldiers I beat up were the bad guys since I attacked them.

*Cheese Head walks up to Maryssa who's browsing the market.*

**Cheese Head:** Hey, Myrlinda. What are you looking for, and when did you change clothes?

**Ryven:** Hey, Cheese Head. Myrlinda's over here.

**Cheese Head:** Oh.

*Maryssa recognizes the Cheese Heads.*

**Maryssa:** Are you Cheese Head!?

*They all shudder in fear.*

**Maryssa:** No, it's okay! I'm friends with Serah! My name's Maryssa! I-

*They all pull Maryssa into an alleyway, covering her mouth.*

**Cheese Head:** You can't just shout out our names, like that! You'll get us caught!

**Maryssa:** I'm sorry.

**Ryven:** You look an awful lot similar to my sister.

**Myrlinda:** Yeah...

**Maryssa:** Serah said we were pretty similar.

**Chess:** So how do you know Serah?

**Maryssa:** I was her friend a really long time ago, before she was exiled. I was so happy to see

her again when she visited me earlier today! She told me all about you guys! I was surprised to hear our legendary hero is now a part of your crew!

**Cheese Head:** So you knew Serah back then... could you tell us about her exile and what her parents did?

**Maryssa:** Oh, sure. It all started back when we were teenagers.

*Maryssa is walking through a park and she overhears Serah behind a bush.*

**Serah:** There, now I look beautiful!

**Maryssa:** Hey, aren't you that Johnson kid? What's with the dress?

**Serah:** My name's not Johnson, it's Serah! I'm wearing this dress because I want to!

**Maryssa:** But I thought your name was Johnson?

**Serah:** I don't want my name to be Johnson! I want my name to be Serah!

*Ryven interrupts the flashback.*

**Ryven:** Wait a minute... so Serah's a man!?

*A foot kicks Ryven in the face quicker than lightning.*

**Ryven:** What was that for!?

**Cheese Head:** Completely missing the point of the damn story. Please continue, Maryssa.

*The flashback continues.*

**Maryssa:** Oh. So what's a boy doing in a dress and calling himself Serah?

**Serah:** I'm not a boy! I'm a girl! What's so damn hard to understand about that!?

**Maryssa:** I'm sorry. I've just never met someone who... used to be a boy.

**Serah:** I was never a boy. I pretended to be one, but it never felt right. Today that's all gonna change though. For the first time I'm gonna walk out in the open world and dress and talk how



I've always wanted to! I've been working so hard for this moment. I've been practicing to make my voice higher for years! I've finally gotten to the point where I can sound just like all the other girls, and I've gotten so many pretty dresses! I had to steal them while no one was looking, but I'll pay them back later, I promise!

**Maryssa:** Aren't people gonna make fun of you if you go out dressed like that?

**Serah:** I don't care. I'd rather be made fun of than have to go on for a minute longer being something I'm not.

**Maryssa:** Okay. Why don't I go with you?

**Serah:** Huh? You'd do that?

**Maryssa:** Of course!

**Serah:** Thanks!

*They hold hands and walk out from behind the bush. They continue to walk around the park.*

**Maryssa:** You look very pretty, Serah

**Serah:** Really!?

**Maryssa:** Mhm. Your dress is beautiful.

**Serah:** Thanks!

**Boy 1:** What's up with Johnson?

**Maryssa:** Her name is Serah.

**Boy 2:** No, his name is Johnson! Why's he in a girly dress!?

**Serah:** My name is Serah, you jackass! I'm in a dress because it makes me look as beautiful as I feel!

**Boy 3:** You're some kind of freak!

**Maryssa:** Shut up!

*Maryssa pushes the boy down.*

**Boys 1 & 2:** Hey, keep your hands off of him!

**Boy 3:** Let her go. Why are you standing up for that freak?

**Maryssa:** Serah's my friend, and she's not a freak, you ass!

**Boy 1:** Well what else do you call a guy in a dress?

**Maryssa:** Serah is a woman, and a very beautiful one!

**Boy 2:** Shut up, already!

*He punches Maryssa in the face and she falls to the ground.*

**Serah:** You just messed with the wrong girl's friend.

*Suddenly, multiple pairs of shadow fists strike all three of the boys from all angles. Their bodies become bruised and beaten and their faces bleed.*

**Boy 1:** Ouch! What was that!?

**Boy 2:** You really are a freak!

**Boy 3:** You're the devil!

*Serah uses the shadow fists to pick up all three of the boys simultaneously from a distance.*

**Serah:** You realize my stepfather is Lieutenant "Blackfist" Barrenson, right? What do you think he'd do to you if he found out all the mean things you said to me and that you hit my friend? Do you think he'd have you exiled? Or maybe he'd have you executed! Let's find out!

**Boys:** Wait! We're sorry, Johnson! Please don't tell your stepdad!

*Serah gives them a cold and ominous stare.*

**Serah:** What did you just call me?

**Boys:** S-Serah! We're sorry, Serah!

**Serah:** Now apologize to my friend!

**Boys:** We're sorry, Maryssa!

*Serah drops the boys.*

**Serah:** Now if you ever make fun of me or try to hurt my friends again... then you'll be dead for sure.

*The boys all scream in fear and run away.*

**Serah:** Why did you stick up for me like that? I could have just dealt with it.

**Maryssa:** Well why would I let those jerks badmouth my friend?

**Serah:** Thank you. You wanna see a secret? It's really cool!

**Maryssa:** Sure, what is it?

*They exit the park, and a soldier in a decorated jacket takes notes on everything he just witnessed. They arrive at what appears to be a dead end in the back of an alley. Serah pushes a brick in and a door rises from the ground.*

**Maryssa:** That's so cool!

**Serah:** Mhm! Let's go inside!

*Serah and Maryssa walk down into the military base.*

**Serah:** This is the training room! It's where all the soldiers get stronger!

**Maryssa:** It's huge!

**Serah:** Uh huh!

*They sit down.*

**Serah:** So do you really think I look pretty?

**Maryssa:** Of course! You're absolutely gorgeous!

*Serah blushes.*

**Serah:** Well I think you're pretty, too!

*Maryssa blushes.*

**Maryssa:** Really?

**Serah:** You're beautiful! I've never met a girl that's looked as pretty as you!

*Maryssa's face turns red.*

**Maryssa:** Really!?

**Serah:** Of course!

**Maryssa:** I think I can say the same thing to you!

**Serah:** Well what are you waiting for then, huh?

**Maryssa:** What do you mean?

**Serah:** Kiss me! You're totally into me! I can tell because your face keeps turning red!

*Maryssa's face turns red again.*

**Maryssa:** Okay...

*They kiss. Myrlinda interrupts the flashback and is furious.*

**Myrlinda:** Wait a minute! You kissed MY Serah!?

**Maryssa:** It was years before you ever met her! She wasn't your Serah when I kissed her then!

It's not like when I kissed her earlier today when you already knew her!

*Maryssa covers her mouth realizing what she just said. Myrlinda's face turns red with anger.*

**Myrlinda:** YOU DID WHAT!?

*Myrlinda starts shaking Maryssa violently.*

**Myrlinda:** I swear to god, I'm gonna kill you! How dare you kiss my wonderful Serah, you love-stealing bitch!

*Cheese Head clunks Myrlinda on the head, causing her to faint.*

**Cheese Head:** Sorry about that. Are you okay, Maryssa?

*Maryssa is dazed and confused from all the shaking.*

**Maryssa:** I'm fine...

**Chess:** So far you've only told us about some love story. That doesn't explain much.

**Maryssa:** Well... right where I left off is where the love story ends and all of the horror begins...

*The flashback continues.*

**Serah's mother:** What the hell is this?

*Serah's mother walks into the training room, and the two kids face her.*

**Serah:** Hi, mom.

**Mother:** Why the hell are you dressed like that, Johnson?

**Serah:** I like wearing dresses, and I don't want my name to be Johnson anymore. I want it to be Serah.

**Mother:** What!?! Have you lost your mind!?! You can't just change your name like that! Not on my watch! No son of mine is going to dress like that and pretend he's a girl!

**Serah:** I am a girl and I'm not your son! I'm your daughter!

*Serah's mother slaps her.*

**Mother:** Don't you backtalk me, Johnson! Go to your room and change into your normal clothes right now!

**Serah:** No! I'd rather be dead than wear those stupid clothes again! I'd rather die than be a stupid boy and I don't care what you say!

**Mother:** What did you just say? You'd rather die... Well let's if you change your mind before that happens!

*Serah's mother kicks her to the floor, and starts stepping on her repeatedly.*

**Maryssa:** Leave Serah alone! She's a beautiful woman and you have no right to tell her otherwise!

*Serah's mother kicks Maryssa in the face.*

**Mother:** How dare you try to defend this abominable freak! Calling this thing a woman is an insult to all the real women in the world! Besides, you're not off the hook either! You two think that you can both be women and kiss each other!? That's sickening!

*Maryssa cowers in fear towards the wall. Serah's mother continues to step on her, and then stops.*

**Mother:** Now if you listen to me and stop all this nonsense, I might forgive you and let you still live under this roof. Say something will you!?

*Serah gets up.*

**Serah:** I can't. I won't...

**Mother:** Fine, then I'll beat it into you some more!

*Her leg swings to kick Serah again.*

**Serah:** (I have no choice. I have to do this.)

*Suddenly a single shadow fist strikes Serah's mother in the face, who staggers backwards as a result.*

**Mother:** You devil! You have the nerve to hit me!? After everything I've done for you!? You wouldn't be alive if it weren't for me, you worthless little shit! You repay me by becoming some freak and hitting me!?

**Serah:** I owe you nothing.

*Serah coughs up blood while she and her mother stare at each other menacingly.*

**Barrenson:** What the hell is going on?

*Barrenson walks into the room.*

**Mother:** Honey, I'm so glad you're here! You're never going to believe this!

**Barrenson:** I've been told by one of my subordinates about the fiasco you had in the park. He saw you beat up those three innocent young boys and then threaten to have them executed under MY name! As if it wasn't enough for you to turn into a total freak, you had to steal my powers and use my name in such a foul manner! How dare you! I'm going to show you what a real man can do with the Blackfists!

*A large shadow hand pounds Serah's body. She's flung to the back wall.*

**Mother:** That little devil spoke back at me when I told it to do as I say, and then it hit me with your Blackfist!

**Barrenson:** You did WHAT!?

*Barrenson warps in front of Serah with his shadow powers and picks her up by the throat with one hand. He gets angrier as he speaks and squeezes her throat harder and harder.*

**Barrenson:** Give me one good reason not to squeeze the life out of you! Listen to me and listen good! You have no right to treat your mother this way! Back talking her is one thing, but hitting her!? I ought to kill you right now! Say something, you worthless garbage!

*Serah's body becomes limp.*

**Mother:** Did you kill it?

**Barrenson:** Maybe. I don't feel a heartbeat anymore. Tch, good riddance.

*Barrenson drops Serah's body.*

**Mother:** Throw that trash out onto the street. If it is still alive, I don't ever wanna see it again.

**Maryssa:** (They... killed her!?)

*Maryssa gets up and confronts Barrenson.*

**Maryssa:** That was my friend, you bastard!

*Maryssa hits Barrenson, to no affect.*

**Barrenson:** Don't think you're off the hook, little girl! Standing up for that thing, I should have you thrown in jail!

*Barrenson kicks Maryssa aside.*

**Barrenson:** Get out of my sight unless you want to end up like that freak over there.

*Maryssa stares over at Serah's still body and is afraid for her life. She runs away, crying.*

**Maryssa:** (I'm so sorry, Serah...)

*The flashback ends.*

**Maryssa:** So I ran away because I didn't want to die... I just wish I could have done something!

*Maryssa begins to cry.*

**Cheese Head:** You did everything you could, Maryssa.

**Ryven:** That... That's god damn awful.

**Myrlinda:** Serah had to go through that!?! It's unbelievable somebody could do that...

**Chess:** And over a whole lot of nothing... nearly killing your child, calling them a worthless



demon and throwing them out on the street... all over something so harmless...

*McGuven is crying.*

**McGuven:** The next time I see her, I'm going to give her the biggest hug this wingspan will allow me!

**Maryssa:** I wasn't there myself, but I know what happened after I left. Serah told me earlier today.

*They all gain interest in what Maryssa has to say, as another flashback begins. Serah awakens in an alleyway somewhere.*

**Serah:** (Where am I?)

*She tries to get up but is in too much pain.*

**Serah:** (I can't move... everything hurts...)

*A man discovers Serah.*

**Man:** Oh my god, there's a girl just laying here in the alleyway! She looks like somebody beat the life out of her! Somebody help!

*Serah loses consciousness, and wakes up later in a bed.*

**Serah:** What happened? Where am I?

**Man:** We found you in an alleyway beaten up!

**Serah:** We?

*Serah looks around to find herself in a crowded place.*

**Man:** You're in the hospital! What happened to you, little girl!? Who beat you up like that!?

**Doctor:** That's enough with the questions, sir. You're only going to make her condition worse if you stress her.

**Man:** Alright...

*The man leaves.*

**Doctor:** You're no ordinary girl, are you?

**Serah:** What are you talking about? Of course I am!

**Doctor:** I had to tend to all of the wounds of your body. As a doctor I know all the differences between male and female anatomy.

**Serah:** Please, don't hurt me! I don't wanna die!

**Doctor:** I'm not going to ask any of the details of how you ended up like this, but I'm pretty sure I know why they did this to you. The same thing happened to me once.

**Serah:** What do you mean?

**Doctor:** Some people just don't want to accept how we feel. They're too stuck up to understand it.

**Serah:** Do you mean?

**Doctor:** Yes, we're two in the same.

**Serah:** Wow... so how did you get those?

*Serah points to the doctor's chest.*

**Doctor:** Oh, that's simple. Just take some of these.

*The doctor holds up some pills.*

**Serah:** Really!? All you have to do is take pills!?

**Doctor:** That's right, but they take a while to start working.

**Serah:** Well then let me start right now!

**Doctor:** Are you sure that's what you want?

**Serah:** More than anything! All the other girls are already starting to grow!

**Doctor:** Say, how long have you been working on that voice of yours?

**Serah:** Years! I just finally got to the point where I can sound like everybody else!

**Doctor:** That sure takes dedication. I guess I can't stop you then.

*The doctor pulls some pills out of a drawer and places them next to Serah's bed.*

**Doctor:** Here you go. Take just two every day, and not a single pill more. If you take more than that...

*The doctor grows a menacing look.*

**Doctor:** It would kill you!

*Serah shudders in fear.*

**Serah:** Okay! Two a day, I promise!

*Serah puts the pill in her mouth.*

**Serah:** Is it supposed to just melt like that?

**Doctor:** Yes. Now you're also going to need one more set of pills. The ones I gave you are the female hormone, estrogen, but your body still produces the male hormone, testosterone. Either I give you more pills to stop the effects of the testosterone, or...

**Serah:** Or?

*The doctor holds up a pair of scissors and gives an evil grin.*

**Doctor:** We have to cut them off!

*Serah looks down, and then shudders.*

**Doctor:** Don't worry. You'll only be in excruciating pain for a couple of hours!

*Serah swallows her fear.*

**Serah:** Okay then. Cut them off! I don't care how much it hurts! It's not like I've never been through worse!

**Doctor:** That's some damn spirit you got there, little girl. You really are ready for this, huh?

**Serah:** I'd rather die than have to be something I'm not!

**Doctor:** That's the fighting spirit! Everything's gonna be okay for you, little girl. Nobody will ever be able to break that tough spirit of yours. I don't recall I ever got your name.

**Serah:** My name is Serah.

**Doctor:** I'm Dr. Suenne, but you can just call me doctor. Did you come up with that name yourself?

**Serah:** Mhm!

**Doctor:** It's a beautiful name for a very beautiful girl.

*Serah gives the doctor a huge grin.*

**Doctor:** By the way, I lied about the pain. You won't feel a thing during surgery because you'll be on anesthesia. You'll be sore and have to stay here for about three days, but it's not as bad as I made it seem.

*Serah wipes the sweat off her forehead.*

**Serah:** What a relief...

**Doctor:** I'll start surgery later tonight. For now just rest and heal from all of your wounds, and make sure you eat to build your strength back up.

**Serah:** Okay!

*The doctor leaves the room. Later that night, Serah wakes up after her surgery.*

**Serah:** What happened?

**Doctor:** Your surgery was a success.

**Serah:** Hehe! I thought something was missing! Haha! Hey, doctor! You've got a really long nose! Hahaha!

**Doctor:** The anesthesia's working alright. You know you're a very lucky little girl. For reasons I'm sure you can imagine, most people can't get surgery for a really long time, if at all. Doctors don't want to do the surgeries because they're either nitwits or cowards.

**Serah:** Really? That sounds terrible...

**Doctor:** Most people don't get to start medication either. You're lucky you get to take them at all, let alone at an age as young as yours!

**Serah:** Really!?

**Doctor:** The earlier you start medication, the better the results. As ironic as it may sound after nearly being beaten to death, you're more fortunate than a lot of other people like us in the world.

**Serah:** Huh. So will my nose get as long as yours?

**Doctor:** Yes, it'll engulf your entire head eventually.

**Serah:** Whoa!

**Doctor:** Anyway, I've got a little present for you.

**Serah:** A present! Cool! Let me see it!

*The doctor gets out a notebook.*

**Doctor:** In here I've written everything you'll ever need to know about the medication and all its effects. There's also a lifetime supply of slips authorizing you to have the medication. The only catch is that you can never tell anyone what the medication is for, and I'm sure you know why.

**Serah:** Yes, doctor. Thank you.

**Doctor:** And if you don't remember this conversation tomorrow, everything I told you today is right behind the front cover.

**Serah:** So does the ground shake whenever you sneeze?

**Doctor:** Yes, it does. Do you know how I make my nose grow?

**Serah:** How?

*The doctor pinches Serah's nose and puts her thumb in between her fingers.*

**Doctor:** By stealing other peoples' noses!

**Serah:** Hey! Give me my nose back!

*The doctor opens her hand.*

**Doctor:** Whoops, I dropped it.

**Serah:** Ah! Where did it go!?

**Doctor:** Better find it before it's lost forever!

**Serah:** No!

*Serah shuffles through her covers, and the doctor leaves chuckling and grinning. Two days later, the doctor talks to Serah on her bed.*

**Doctor:** Well, you're set for life, kiddo. You're fully recovered from your wounds and your surgery, and you can go to any pharmacy in the world to get your medication.

**Serah:** Thank you so much, doctor! You're amazing!

*Serah hugs the doctor.*

**Doctor:** So, do you have anywhere to live?

**Serah:** No...

**Doctor:** Guess you're coming home with me then.

**Serah:** What? Really!?

**Doctor:** Mhm.

**Serah:** I can't believe it! That's great!

*The flashback ends.*

**Maryssa:** So she got all the help she needed from the doctor and lived at her place. She visited me later that day, and I feel so awful about what I said to her...

*Maryssa is outside playing and Serah comes to visit her alone.*

**Serah:** Hey, Maryssa!

**Maryssa:** Hey, Serah...

**Serah:** What's wrong?

**Maryssa:** My parents heard that you were okay and living at Dr. Suenne's house. I was really excited because I thought you were dead, but when I asked them if we could go and visit, they said I'm not allowed to talk to you anymore.

**Serah:** But, why?

**Maryssa:** They said I shouldn't be going around kissing girls, and they don't like how your mother and your stepdad hit me. They said you're just a bad influence... I'm sorry...

**Serah:** But Dr. Suenne gave me these pills and I'm gonna start growing!

*Serah puts her hand on her chest to indicate where.*

**Serah:** I even got surgery! I'm just like you are!

*Maryssa starts crying.*

**Maryssa:** I'm sorry...

*Maryssa goes into her house and closes the door. The flashback ends.*

**Maryssa:** I should've been nicer to her... I should have spent more time with her before she left...

**Cheese Head:** Don't worry about that, it's in the past.

**Maryssa:** Anyway, Dr. Suenne was basically the mother Serah never had, but it was short-lived... it only took a month for Barrenson to find out Serah was still alive...

*Serah sits at a table while the doctor works at the stove.*

**Doctor:** After I finish making breakfast we've got to head to the hospital, like always.

**Serah:** I like going with you to the hospital! I get to learn so much!

**Doctor:** Do you want to become a doctor when you're older?

**Serah:** Maybe.

*There's a banging at the door.*

**Barrenson:** Open up, this is the United World Government! Lieutenant Barrenson speaking!

*Serah is completely fear-stricken at the sound of Barrenson's voice.*

**Doctor:** Stay right there, Serah.

*The doctor walks to the door to open it.*

**Serah:** Wait! Don't!

*The doctor has already opened the door. Barrenson holds up a poster of Serah.*

**Barrenson:** We're looking for this child, and I believe you treated them at the hospital, am I correct?

**Doctor:** That's right. I had her rest up until her wounds recovered and then I had her discharged. Don't know where she went off to.



**Barrenson:** Is that so? Is there anyone else at home with you?

**Doctor:** Nope, just me.

**Barrenson:** I don't like being lied to, Dr. Suenne. I heard another voice in there. What are you hiding!?

*Barrenson uses his powers to warp past the doctor and into the kitchen, where Serah stands.*

**Barrenson:** So you're still alive...

*Serah is too afraid to move a muscle.*

**Doctor:** No! Leave her alone!

*The doctor rushes in front of Serah, blocking Barrenson off from her.*

**Barrenson:** That demon child is wanted by the government! If you resist my orders to hand it over, I'll shoot you on the spot!

*Barrenson gets out his gun.*

**Doctor:** Serah... You need to run. Run away and never look back!

**Serah:** But what about you!?

**Doctor:** Serah, run! Now!

*Serah runs out of the house looking back. Barrenson begins to chase her until the doctor stands in his way again.*

**Barrenson:** Get out of my way, immediately!

**Doctor:** I'll never let you lay a finger on her!

**Barrenson:** Grrr! I'm tired of you getting in the way!

*Barrenson puts a shotgun to the doctor's chest.*

**Doctor:** You have to stay strong, Serah. You'll find a place to call home one day, I promise!

You just have to keep going.

*Barrenson pulls the trigger. Doctor Suenne's body falls the ground.*

**Serah:** Doctor... Doctor Suenne!

*Serah continues to run as she cries. The flashback ends.*

**Chess:** God damn... Barrenson is cold-blooded...

**Ryven:** Now I'm really starting to want to beat the crap out of this guy.

**Myrlinda:** How did Serah even deal with so many awful things?

*McGoven and Cheese Head are on the floor crying.*

**Maryssa:** We're not even done yet.

*Cheese Head and McGoven wail as rivers flow out of their eyes.*

**Chess:** Oh my god...

*The flashback continues. Serah is on the streets and her stomach growls.*

**Serah:** Shut up... we don't have any food or any money...

*Serah arrives at a marketplace and walks around looking at all the food. Her stomach continues to growl even louder.*

**Serah:** Alright, fine!

*Serah hides behind an apple store in an alleyway. She uses a shadow fist to grab an apple and bring it back to her. She wolfs it down hastily. She hesitantly grabs another and eats it just as fast. She grabs one more and the storekeeper notices her in the alleyway.*

**Storekeeper:** Hey, you need to pay for those!

*Serah finishes the third apple and runs out of the back alleyway and through the streets, but the storekeeper starts chasing her with a broom. She uses the shadow fists to pile as many apples as*

*she can into her arms. She tries to run away with them all, but she trips since she can't see where she's going. Then she gets up and runs away without picking any of them up, far out of sight of the storekeeper.*

**Storekeeper:** Don't come back!

*Later that night, Serah is hungry again and tries to look for food, but all the stores are closed. Serah finds herself looking at the garbage as her stomach roars. She gets out a half-eaten piece of meat and starts to nibble it slowly, then starts crying.*

**Serah:** (It tastes so awful... but I'm so hungry...)

*Serah finishes the piece of meat, and wanders the streets looking for some place warm. She finds an old blanket someone threw away and tries to wrap herself up in an alleyway. The blanket has holes in it so it does a less than perfect job keeping out the cold air. Crying, Serah eventually falls asleep. The next morning someone pokes her head with a broom.*

**Man:** Hey, get out of here, shoo! You can't just sleep wherever you want, you lazy bum! Now git!

*The man chases Serah away with a broom. She wanders the streets until she comes across a building with the door wide open. She enters it, holding her blanket tight so she doesn't lose it. The building is filled with many homeless. A lady serves food to all of the people, who have their own blankets wrapped around them, which all look in good condition.*

**Lady:** Oh dear... looks like we have a guest...

*She walks up to Serah slowly and gets on her knees to speak to her.*

**Lady:** Hello. Can you tell me what your name is?

**Serah:** Serah.

**Lady:** Do you live anywhere, Serah?

**Serah:** No...

**Lady:** That's what I thought... Come inside and we'll get you something to eat.

**Serah:** What? Really?

**Lady:** Yes, we have plenty of food here, and let's say we get you a blanket without any holes in it.

**Serah:** Okay.

*The lady gets Serah warm food and a blanket. Serah devours the food quickly while the lady asks Serah questions.*

**Lady:** I have to officially register you into the home, so I can get all the supplies we'll need for you to live here.

**Serah:** You mean I'll get to live here?

**Lady:** Yes. All I need is your full name so I can deal with some paperwork.

**Serah:** My name's Rattel Serah.

**Lady:** Okay. Just sign your name here then.

*The lady hands Serah a paper, which she signs.*

**Lady:** Did you say Rattel?

**Serah:** Yeah... Why?

**Lady:** We have another person here living with that name. Hey Geordan! Come over here!

**Geordan:** Yes, what is it?

**Lady:** This young girl has the same name as you, Rattel.

**Geordan:** Ohoho! What an exciting coincidence! Hello there, little girl. My name's Rattel

Geordan, but most people call me Geordie.

**Serah:** My name's Rattel Serah. Nice to meet you.

**Geordan:** Would you happen to know your mother's name?

**Serah:** Rissa.

**Geordan:** What!? Rattel Rissa... That can't be! That's my ex-wife!

**Lady:** Are you saying this girl is your daughter?

**Geordan:** That appears to be the case...

**Serah:** Wait... so you're my dad!?

**Geordan:** Yep. I married your mother a long time ago. We had you after we got married. Our marriage was short-lived though. Your mother and I really couldn't agree on anything once we had you. She cared more about herself than she cared about taking care of you, and I couldn't stand it. I tried to divorce her and get custody over you, but that woman did everything in her power to keep that from happening. I lost my profession, my home, and even my health because of her. I honestly can't say I'm surprised that you ended up here.

*Serah stares at her father in confusion, still not entirely able to grasp that he is indeed her father.*

**Geordan:** I'm sure this is a bit hard to grasp since I've been gone for your entire life. I have a picture of you though.

*Geordan pulls out an old picture of him holding Serah.*

**Geordan:** That's you as a baby, and that's me when I was young and hip, and before I lost all of my hair. I could've sworn you were a boy though, but that just goes to show how forgetful these old bones of mine are.

**Serah:** Mom's not old, so how did you get so old so quickly?

**Geordan:** Ohoho! Well I'm a couple years older than your mother, but living on the streets certainly hasn't helped my body's condition. Stress and malnourishment have made me a lot older than I really am. We have so much to catch up on, Serah! I've dreamed of the day I'd finally meet you for years!

**Lady:** I think I'll let you two be then.

*The lady walks away, and Serah and her father discuss the day away, talking about her life and how she was kicked out of the house.*

**Geordan:** I'm very sorry about the rough life you've had to live, Serah. I wish I could have been able to protect you and take you away from that evil woman. If these bones of mine still had strength, I'd go over there and teach them a lesson!

**Serah:** It's okay, dad. It's her fault, not yours.

**Geordan:** I'm just so glad I got to finally see what my baby grew up to be.

*He starts crying and hugs Serah.*

**Serah:** I'm really glad I got to meet you, too dad. Mom just said you were dead, so I thought I'd never get to meet my real dad.

**Geordan:** I just want you to know that I never stopped loving you, Serah dear.

**Serah:** I love you, too, dad.

*Serah hugs her father back and smiles. The flashback is briefly interrupted.*

**Maryssa:** But of course-

**Cheese Head:** No! Say it ain't so! It can't be!

*Cheese Head and McGuven continue crying.*

**Maryssa:** Just one month later...

*The flashback continues. Serah is talking to her father when Barrenson walks into the facility and holds up a poster of Serah. This time the poster also reads "EXILE".*

**Barrenson:** Nobody move a muscle! My name is Lieutenant "Blackfist" Barrenson! I'm looking for this child who is to be exiled from Gregoria as ordered by the World Government! I've received information that they're here! Show me where the kid is, and nobody gets hurt!

**Serah:** You killed Doctor Suenne, you bastard!

*Serah punches Barrenson with a shadow fist, to no affect.*

**Geordan:** Serah, no!

**Barrenson:** There you are, you devil! Finally... You're not slipping through my hands this time, you little brat!

*Geordan grabs Serah by the shoulders.*

**Geordan:** Serah, I know this is going to be very hard on you, but you need to run far away from here! Leave Gregoria and go somewhere this man will never find you! You have to leave, right away! Do you understand?

*Serah starts to tear up.*

**Serah:** But if I run away again, what's gonna happen to you?

**Geordan:** That doesn't matter, Serah! What matters is that you stay safe! Now as soon as I tell you to, you have to run and never stop until you're far, far away from here!

*Geordan gets up.*

**Geordan:** You filthy monster! How dare you lay a hand on my child!

*Geordan grabs a hold of Barrenson.*

**Geordan:** Serah, run! Now! Leave Gregoria and don't stop running!

*Serah cries and runs off, while the other guys in the home also try to hold Barrenson down.*

**Barrenson:** You filthy rats! Unhand me! You're letting it get away!

**Geordan:** Hello there, Barrenson. How's that bitch, Rissa, doing? I really didn't like hearing about what you and her did to my daughter. You could say I'm angry enough to actually fight with these old bones of mine!

*Geordan tightens his grip around Barrenson's neck.*

**Barrenson:** You're Geordie, that useless ex-husband my wife always talks about! Of course a loser like you would've made that demon you call your child! Now all of you unhand me!

*Barrenson uses his Blackfists to push all of the men off of him, busting holes into the structure and tearing up the flooring.*

**Barrenson:** How dare you all defy me! Interfering with the government is a crime punishable by death!

*Serah continues to run as she hears several gunshots coming from the home. Serah cries and screams as she runs away.*

**Serah:** Dad! Dad! DAD!

*Barrenson starts chasing Serah, all the way to the Gregoria border.*

**Soldier:** Lieutenant, we can't follow her past this point because we'll be outside of Gregoria boundaries.

**Barrenson:** You are officially exiled from Gregoria! Never come back or you will be executed!

*The flashback ends, and everyone, including Ryven, is crying.*

**Ryven:** Shut up, I'm not crying!



**Maryssa:** I'm sure you guys know what happened next. She ran for days until she reached Barogia and met Krogur...

*Serah is on the streets rummaging for food in the garbage. She pulls out a moldy piece of bread.*

**Krogur:** My dear, what are you doing? You shouldn't eat that!

**Serah:** I don't have anything else to eat...

**Krogur:** Really? Well how about I fix that?

*Krogur hands Serah a fresh piece of bread. Serah wolfs it down without a word.*

**Krogur:** I have plenty more food back at my home. Why don't you come with me and stay there? If you work for me, I'll give you everything your heart could possibly desire!

**Serah:** Go away! If you take me into your house then you're just going to end up dead like everybody else I cared about!

**Krogur:** Do you know who I am? I'm King Krogur, ruler of Barogia! Nobody can kill me because I'm royalty!

**Serah:** A king?

**Krogur:** Yes, and that's why if you live with me and work at my castle, I'll give you everything you've ever dreamed of!

**Serah:** But what if something bad happens...

**Krogur:** I'm gonna show you a little secret.

*Krogur grows to his massive size.*

**Krogur:** Nobody can hurt me, because I am the strongest man in the world!

*Serah is completely awe-struck at his size. Krogur shrinks back down to normal.*

**Krogur:** Now please, come with me, won't you?

**Serah:** Okay!

*The flashback ends.*

**Cheese Head:** Well that's it then. We need to kick that guy's ass, and we need to do it right now!

**Myrlinda:** You're damn right!

**Ryven:** That Barrenson guy's a real piece of crap! I can't wait to cut him into pieces!

**McGuven:** I've never been this ready for a fight!

**Chess:** I couldn't agree more!

**Maryssa:** Wait, you're gonna fight Lieutenant Barrenson!?

**Cheese Head:** Damn right we are, we'll show that guy the real power of our 200,000 maroon bounty!

**Maryssa:** You guys are worth that much!?

**Cheese Head:** And that's not even including Serah or Chess!

**McGuven:** So you know where that underground base is? Could you please show us?

**Maryssa:** Of course.

**Myrlinda:** Well then let's get moving!

*Myrlinda pounds her fist into her hand.*

**Chess:** Exactly!

**Maryssa:** Alright, just follow me then.

**Cheese Head:** Wait a minute. Where's Serah?

**Maryssa:** She said she had some errands to take care of.

**Chess:** And she knows exactly where the base is, too?

**Maryssa:** Yes.

*The crew all realize where Serah is. Meanwhile, Serah opens the base door and walks in.*

**All:** SERAH!

**Maryssa:** Let's hurry!

*Soldiers ambush the Cheese Heads.*

**Soldier:** Stop right there, Cheese Heads!

**Ryven:** We don't have time for you creeps!

*Ryven slashes through the horde of soldiers like a speeding bullet, guiding Maryssa and the rest of the crew to the location of the military base. Meanwhile, Serah walks down a corridor in the base, when three guards notice her.*

**Soldier 1:** Hey, that's-

**Soldier 2:** No way!

**Soldier 3:** Oh no, it's Serah!

**Serah:** Wow. I never thought I'd see you three boys again. If you'll excuse me, I have business with Lieutenant Barrenson.

**Soldier 1:** Wait just a minute! We can't let you through!

**Soldier 2:** Yeah! You're supposed to be exiled from Gregoria!

**Soldier 3:** The fact that you came back here means that you're a criminal!

*Serah walks over to the soldiers, who all shudder in fear.*

**Serah:** If you boys couldn't handle me when you were kids, what makes you think you can stop me now?

**Soldier 1:** We're honorary soldiers of the Gregoria Military!

**Soldier 2:** Lieutenant Barrenson has praised us for our heroism and bravery!

**Soldier 3:** We won't let a freak like you waltz in here and do as you please!

**Serah:** I thought I told you never to speak to me like that again?

*The soldiers press their backs against the wall. Serah slams the soldiers' heads together, causing them all to faint. Serah continues to walk down the corridor when a soldier in a decorated jacket confronts Serah.*

**Serah:** I'm tired of these damn interruptions.

*Serah gets out her blades and spins them around her fingers.*

**Serah:** You're Barrenson's most trustworthy subordinate, a Sergeant Major if I'm not mistaken.

*The soldier remains entirely silent.*

**Serah:** Move out of the way.

*Silence. Serah strikes at the soldier with her blade, but the soldier dissipates upon contact. Serah gets struck in the back by the soldier's fist, causing her to fall to her knees.*

**Serah:** I don't have time for your stupid tricks!

*Serah swipes at the soldier behind her, but he disappears again, then reappears from above, stomping his foot onto her back, making her fall to the floor.*

**Serah:** (Damn it! How does he keep jumping around like that!?)

**Barrenson's voice:** (Kilubara is my most trusted subordinate. He can create as many decoys as he pleases to disorient his opponents.)

**Serah:** (They're fakes!)

*Serah gets up and surveys her surroundings, as she can see three of Kilubara at the same time.*

**Serah:** (All I have to do is find the real one.)

*Serah stares at the copies of Kilubara.*

**Serah:** (There has to be some way to tell which is the real one.)

*Serah examines one and notices it's breathing, albeit very faintly.*

**Serah:** (That one's breathing!)

*Serah slams her foot downward onto Kilubara's head. The fakes disappear, and Kilubara jumps backward. He then creates more clones to surround Serah. Serah examines very closely and strikes at another one. It dissipates and then the real Kilubara pounds Serah's face against the wall.*

**Serah:** Now you're really starting to piss me off!

*Serah begins glowing red as she grabs Kilubara's hand. She swings her foot to kick Kilubara's face into the wall, and he slides to the ground.*

**Serah:** Finally...

*Serah continues to walk down the hall. Meanwhile, the rest of the crew runs through the streets.*

**Cheese Head:** Hurry the hell up, guys!

**Ryven:** We're going as fast as we can with all of these soldiers getting in the way!

**Cheese Head:** You're all really starting to piss me off! Pain Burst!

*Cheese Head blasts all the soldiers away in a powerful explosion of aura.*

**Maryssa:** We're almost there, guys! The alleyway should be right up here on the left!

*They turn left and run to the end of the alleyway.*

**Maryssa:** Now which one was it?

**Cheese Head:** Just press 'em all!

*They all begin pushing bricks randomly, until Myrlinda pushes one of them in.*

**Myrlinda:** I think I got it!

*The door opens up, and they all rush in. As they walk down the corridor, they walk past the three soldiers on the ground.*

**Cheese Head:** Yeah, Serah was here already...

**Myrlinda:** Oh no...

**Ryven:** This isn't good! Some asshole is blocking the way!

*Kilubara stands in the way again.*

**Maryssa:** Never mind this jackass!

*Maryssa turns around and kicks the Kilubara behind them in the groin, causing him to fall to the ground, crying silently.*

**Maryssa:** That one was just a fake! Let's keep going!

*They continue down the corridor. Meanwhile, Serah walks into the training room.*

**Serah:** Get your ass out here, Barrenson!

*Barrenson walks out into the training room.*

**Barrenson:** Calm down, Rissa! Jeese! Huh?

*Barrenson sees Serah standing in the training room.*

**Barrenson:** No way... You've gotta be kidding me. It's you! What the hell are you doing back here, you devil!?

**Serah:** I'm here to make you pay for everything that you did!

*Serah starts to glow red.*

**Barrenson:** What the hell?

*Serah's mother walks out into the training room, yawning and stretching her arms.*

**Rissa:** What's with all the commotion, Barrenson? I'm trying to get my beauty sleep!

*Rissa notices her daughter standing in front of her.*

**Rissa:** Well if it isn't my worthless son...

**Serah:** Shut up, you bitch!

*Serah's glow begins to intensify.*

**Serah:** You two have made my life a living hell! You beat me, called me worthless trash, kicked me out of the house! You killed my father and Dr. Suenne! Every day of my life I've thought about all the hell I've been through because of the both of you!

*The glow around Serah is now an intense wall of red, three times bigger than Serah herself. A wall of shadow is created behind Serah.*

**Barrenson:** You're not running away from me this time! Since you had the nerve to disobey my orders to never return to this town, I'm going to punish you by death!

*The Cheese Heads walk into the training room.*

**Cheese Head:** Serah!

*Serah turns around.*

**Serah:** What are you all doing here!?

**Cheese Head:** We're here to kick that Barrenson guy's ass!

**Serah:** Just go away! I have to deal with this by myself!

*Cheese Head stares at Serah and is so shocked he falls to the ground.*

**Maryssa:** What's up with all that glowing?

**Cheese Head:** That's Pain Share...

**Ryven:** You mean your Pain Share!?! That looks twice as intense as anything we've ever seen

from you!

**Cheese Head:** I know... but I can feel it. I can feel all of her pain in the air... It's... it's awful...

**Rissa:** So who are your little friends there, Johnson?

**Serah:** SHUT THE HELL UP!

**Rissa:** What's the matter, son? Don't want your friends to know how much of a freak you are?

**Serah:** I SAID SHUT UP!

*The aura around Serah starts spurting out in powerful blasts, creating small explosions when they collide with something.*

**Ryven:** Holy crap!

**Cheese Head:** She's letting out all this pain... from an entire lifetime...

**Myrlinda:** Oh my god...

**Serah:** They can't know!

*Ryven strikes the shadow wall with his sword.*

**Barrenson:** Good luck getting past my impenetrable Shadow Wall!

**Ryven:** Cheese Head, we need to do something, fast!

**Cheese Head:** It's almost like her pain... is endless...

**Myrlinda:** Cheese Head, snap out of it!

*Cheese Head recollects himself and stands up.*

**Cheese Head:** Serah! Kick Barrenson's ass!

**Ryven:** Are you crazy!? She's gonna end up killing them both! We might be criminals, but we're not murderers!

**Serah:** With pleasure...



**Barrenson:** Blackfist!

*Barrenson tries to punch Serah with his shadow fist, but he narrowly misses. Serah runs up to*

*Barrenson and strikes him with her fist, causing a loud boom to echo across the room.*

*Barrenson flies to the back wall of the room faster than a bullet. Rissa is shocked that her husband was sent flying.*

**Chess:** Damn...

*Barrenson walks out of the wall.*

**Barrenson:** Blackfist!

*Barrenson punches Serah again with his shadow fist, this time hitting Serah in the face. Serah*

*doesn't budge in the slightest. As soon as the shadow fist vanishes, she continues walking*

*towards him. She reaches the wall and Barrenson tries striking Serah with his fist head on. Serah*

*still doesn't budge. When Barrenson draws his hand back, Serah begins to pound Barrenson into*

*the dust with a flurry of punches. When Serah stops, Barrenson rushes past Serah with his shadow powers.*

**Barrenson:** You're a demon! Prepare to be executed by Lieutenant "Blackfist" Barrenson! I'm gonna send you back to the hell you came from!

*Serah turns around and runs at Barrenson with incredible speed. She pounds her fist into him*

*and sends him flying into the Shadow Wall. He bounces off of it and falls to the floor.*

**Barrenson:** I don't know whatever demonic power you're using... but it doesn't matter... I'm going to kill you just like I should have nine years ago.

*Barrenson runs towards Serah.*

**Serah:** The ones who are going to be killed... ARE YOU AND THAT EVIL BITCH!

*Serah strikes Barrenson with an uppercut, sending him up into the air. He strikes the ceiling and falls back down on the ground. The Shadow Wall disappears.*

**Serah:** NOW DIE!

*Serah pulls out her blades and slices Barrenson's chest repeatedly. Everyone stares at Serah shocked, while Cheese Head runs up to her. Serah stops attacking Barrenson and turns to Rissa.*

**Serah:** DIE!

*Serah slices Rissa, who falls to the ground. Serah gets on her knees and continues to cut her as she screams.*

**Serah:** DIE! I HATE YOU! I WANT YOU TO DIE!

*Cheese Head grabs Serah's arm.*

**Cheese Head:** It's alright. It's all over now.

*Pain Share slowly dies out. Serah drops her blades and starts crying and gasping for air.*

*Everyone walks over to her as Cheese Head helps her get on her feet. Rissa lifts her torso up from the ground.*

**Rissa:** After seeing that performance there, wouldn't you say my son's the devil?

*Cheese Head gives Rissa an evil stare and walks over to her. He grabs her by the throat and pushes her against the floor.*

**Cheese Head:** Your daughter is a beautiful woman that you and your worthless husband had no right to ever lay a finger on! Now shut your mouth before I kill you instead!

*Rissa faints and Cheese Head lets go of her throat and heads over to Serah who's still crying. They all hug Serah.*

**Cheese Head:** Serah, we don't care what anybody else thinks of you. You're our friend and

that's all that matters.

**Maryssa:** They know about all the dumb crap your mother was talking about and they're still your friends regardless!

**Myrlinda:** Yeah, why would we let something like that ruin it?

**Ryven:** You're stuck with us whether you like it or not!

*McGuven is crying.*

**McGuven:** I've wanted to give you this hug for so long!

**Chess:** Your parents had no right to cause you so much pain just because you wanted to be yourself.

**Serah:** Thank you... I love you guys so much...

*They all start to tear up, yes, including Ryven.*

**Cheese Head:** Aw, you're making me cry!

**McGuven:** I can't stop crying as is!

**Ryven:** All of you are wimps... I'm not crying...

**Myrlinda:** We all love you, too!

**Chess:** You guys are the greatest! I'm so happy I got to join this crew!

*They all stop crying and hugging each other.*

**Serah:** So how did you all find out?

**Cheese Head:** Maryssa told us.

*Serah grabs Maryssa's ear and pulls.*

**Serah:** That's funny, because I thought I told her not to say anything about it.

**Maryssa:** Ow! I'm sorry! I totally forgot I wasn't supposed to tell!

**Serah:** Forgetful as always, huh? You're just lucky everything turned out okay.

**Myrlinda:** That reminds me!

*Myrlinda grabs Maryssa and starts shaking her.*

**Myrlinda:** How dare you kiss my beautiful Serah, you nasty witch!

**Maryssa:** Well I'm sorry that you're not good enough for her to kiss you!

**Myrlinda:** She's totally kissed me already!

**Maryssa:** What, once on the cheek!?

*Serah blushes.*

**Serah:** Are they fighting over me?

**Ryven:** You should of seen Myrlinda ring her neck when Maryssa said she kissed you this morning. I've never seen her so pissed!

**Serah:** Oh really?

**Myrlinda:** It doesn't matter where she kissed me or how many times because I'm more attractive anyway!

**Maryssa:** Oh yeah!? You and what A cup!?

**Myrlinda:** You did not just go there! I'm a B at least!

**Maryssa:** Maybe the B stands for bitch...

**Myrlinda:** At least I'm not a ditz!

**Maryssa:** Excuse me!?

**Myrlinda:** You heard me! Or at least I hope you did with that puny brain of yours!

**Maryssa:** Well... Serah adores my appetite! Tell me, can you eat an entire hambone!?

**Myrlinda:** Please! I can eat an entire buffet!

**Maryssa:** Oh, quit lying!

**Ryven:** I wish she was lying.

**Maryssa:** You can't be serious!?

**Myrlinda:** Ha! I win!

**Maryssa:** Yeah, well all that food must explain why you're so fat!

*Myrlinda gives Maryssa a demonic stare.*

**Ryven:** Oh no...

**Myrlinda:** Oh... so is that how it is then?

*Myrlinda swallows Maryssa.*

**Myrlinda:** There! Since I'm so fat I just couldn't resist swallowing you up!

**Maryssa:** What the hell!? Did you just eat me!?

**Serah:** Not really. You'll be fine, Maryssa. Just get ready to be sent flying.

*Serah pushes on Myrlinda's stomach, forcing Maryssa out of it. She screams as she flies through the air and crashes to the ground.*

**Maryssa:** It was do dark... and wet...

*Cheese Head comforts Maryssa.*

**Cheese Head:** I've been there... dozens of times...

**Serah:** Well that wasn't very nice.

**Myrlinda:** So!?

**Serah:** I've just never seen you act this way before.

**Myrlinda:** She kissed my Serah, and that is totally not okay!

**Serah:** Oh, so now I'm your Serah.

*Myrlinda's face turns red.*

**Myrlinda:** Um...

**Serah:** Would you quit blushing already and just kiss me?

**Myrlinda:** O-okay...

*They have a long kiss, while Maryssa pouts. They finish kissing and Serah turns to Maryssa.*

**Serah:** Why are you so upset? You had your turn already!

*Suddenly the crew realizes Barrenson and Rissa backed up against the wall trying to sneak away. The Cheese Head crew, excluding Serah, corner the two, giving them evil grins.*

**Cheese Head:** You know, it was a good thing we didn't let you kill them, Serah!

**Myrlinda:** Yeah, you would've stolen all the fun from us!

**Ryven:** We've all been waiting for a chance to kick these guys' asses!

**McGuven:** Indeed! It looks like they were trying to sneak away like cowards!

**Chess:** Hey, Barrenson! Long time no see!

*Cheese Head starts glowing as he tosses them across the room. They slam into the floor, and then get up and try to run away. They suddenly drop to their knees in agony while Chess smirks. McGuven impales them with his Feather Slicer, causing major short-term pain. Then Ryven slashes them repeatedly, cutting their skin a lot, but not deep enough to be fatal. Then Myrlinda swallows them both and launches them at the back wall. They smash into the wall and don't get up.*

**Cheese Head:** That felt good!

**Myrlinda:** You can say that again!

**Ryven:** That was so worth the wait.

**McGuven:** I feel much better now.

**Chess:** Same here.

*They all stare at Serah with huge grins, which Serah returns.*

**Serah:** Let's go home.

*They leave the military base and stand outside Maryssa's house.*

**Maryssa:** It was amazing getting to meet all of you guys!

*Maryssa hugs Serah.*

**Maryssa:** I'm so happy I got to see you again.

**Serah:** Me, too.

**Maryssa:** Now if you'll excuse me... I have some news to break to Hanks...

*Maryssa walks into the house. Cheese Head turns around and starts to walk away.*

**Cheese Head:** Well, let's go to the Dolphin.

**Serah:** Hold on a minute, I want to hear this.

**Myrlinda:** But isn't that eavesdropping!?

**Serah:** Hush.

*Serah puts her hand over Myrlinda's mouth as they all turn towards the building.*

**Hanks:** Hey, Honey! I made lunch while you were away!

**Maryssa:** Hanks... we need to talk.

**Ryven:** God, I hate those words. It makes me cringe just hearing them.

**Hanks:** What's wrong?

**Maryssa:** This is really hard to explain... but when I was kid my parents said I was only allowed to like boys. They said it wasn't right for girls to like each other like that... So they introduced

me to you, and we dated, and we had a lot of fun, but... I've never felt satisfied with us.

**Hanks:** What do you mean? Is this about that girl you kissed this morning?

**Maryssa:** No, Hanks. It's about how I feel. This relationship, it just isn't right for me.

**Hanks:** I don't understand... Is it something I'm doing wrong!?

**Maryssa:** Well I didn't want to be blunt Hanks, but you just can't take a hint! I don't like men! I don't find them attractive! I don't like dating them! I like women! When I kissed Serah, there was a spark that made it feel so right! I don't get that with guys, and it's not your fault! This is just simply who I am! I'm so sorry that our relationship has already come so far, but I can't keep going on like this just because my parents said I'm not allowed to be myself!

**Hanks:** So... this is it?

**Maryssa:** Yes, Hanks... This is it...

*Hanks starts crying and Maryssa holds him in her arms.*

**Maryssa:** It's gonna be okay, Hanks. This isn't the end of the world. Just let it all out...

**Serah:** I kinda feel bad for the poor guy. He seems like a real sweetheart.

**Ryven:** I honestly didn't see that coming.

**Serah:** I saw it coming as soon as I found out they were married.

**Cheese Head:** Looks like that's all over, now. Let's go back to the ship.

*They all start heading back.*

**Myrlinda:** I still can't believe we actually eavesdropped on them!

**Serah:** I wanted to make sure Maryssa would be okay. Not just now, but later as well.

**Cheese Head:** Why's eavesdropping a big deal anyway?

**Myrlinda:** It's an invasion of privacy!



**Cheese Head:** Then why is privacy so important?

**Myrlinda:** Because nobody wants everyone else to know their deepest darkest secrets, or all of their personal affairs!

**Cheese Head:** I never understood any of that stuff.

**Myrlinda:** Yeah, it shows...

*Serah chuckles.*

**Serah:** If only everybody could be like our little Cheese Head here.

**Cheese Head:** Haha! Yeah!

**Ryven:** Please, I don't even want to think about a world like that!

*Cheese Head clunks Ryven on the head.*

**Ryven:** Hey!

*Ryven hits Cheese Head back.*

**Cheese Head:** Hey!

**Serah:** Settle down, boys. It's no time to be fighting, now is it?

**Chess:** Yeah, we ought to be celebrating!

**Cheese Head:** You're right! C'mon guys, let's hurry back to the ship!

*Serah jumps out in front of them.*

**Serah:** Bet I'll get there first!

*Serah starts running.*

**Cheese Head:** Hey, that's not fair! You got a head start!

*Cheese Head runs after her.*

**Ryven:** Like hell! I'll get there hours before any of you show up!

*Ryven sprints off.*

**McGuven:** Sounds fun to me!

*McGuven flies off.*

**Myrlinda:** Come on, Chess! You don't want to get left behind!

*Myrlinda runs off.*

**Chess:** Hey! Wait for me you guys!

*Chess follows as they all run towards the setting sun back to the Loving Dolphin. Serah hops onto the ship first.*

**Serah:** Looks like I win!

*Cheese Head climbs aboard, and McGuven lands shortly thereafter.*

**Cheese Head:** I was so close, damn it!

**McGuven:** Third isn't too bad.

*Ryven jumps on deck.*

**Ryven:** That's not fair, you can fly!

*Myrlinda hops onto the ship, followed by Chess.*

**Myrlinda:** You're such a slowpoke, Chess!

**Chess:** Awe, damn it... I'm last.

**Cheese Head:** Everyone wait right here!

*Cheese Head runs into the ship and returns with the camera.*

**Cheese Head:** We need a picture with our new crew member in it! Everybody smile!

*They all make a huge grin as Cheese Head runs over to them and jumps up in the air as the camera snaps the photos.*

**Cheese Head:** Perfect!

**Myrlinda:** Now let's eat!

**Chess:** Alright! I'm starving!

**Serah:** Me, too!

**Ryven:** I guess I could eat something.

*They all sit at the dining table.*

**McGuven:** Why don't I cook up all of our favorite foods tonight?

**Myrlinda:** Ham!

**Ryven:** Some rice balls would be nice.

**Chess:** Got any steak?

**McGuven:** Of course! What would you like, Serah?

**Serah:** Do we have any cheese?

**McGuven:** Just cheese?

**Serah:** Just cheese.

**McGuven:** Well I kind of never bought any cheese because I didn't want to upset you know who...

*They all stare at Cheese Head, who's playing with his milk.*

**Serah:** I thought you might say that, so while I was out, I bought some of my own.

*Serah unfolds a tarp to reveal a small wheel of cheese.*

**Myrlinda:** Are you really gonna eat that in front of... him?

*Serah takes a bite of a wedge of cheese. They all shudder in fear and look over at Cheese Head, who's non-surprisingly lost in playing with his milk.*

**Ryven:** That idiot's never gonna notice... Go ahead and eat your cheese.

**Serah:** Will do!

**Myrlinda:** Isn't eating that much cheese all by itself unhealthy?

**Serah:** Probably, but I don't care.

*Serah continues to eat her cheese.*

**Chess:** Well, McGuven did ask her what her favorite food is and that's it.

**Serah:** Cheese Head's just lucky I have a figure to keep or else I'd eat him right up! Just look at how adorable he is!

*McGuven starts bringing out the food.*

**McGuven:** I've got all of your favorites, right here! Ham for the lovely Myrlinda, rice balls for the master swordsman, Ryven, steak for the legendary hero, Chess, and for myself, some nice cold fish.

**Chess:** You eat them raw?

**McGuven:** My stomach wasn't really made for cooked foods. I am a bird of nature after all.

**Chess:** Interesting... so I know something about all of your powers that you'll probably find interesting.

**Serah:** What do you mean?

**Chess:** Well as far as all of you know, you were just born this way and that's that. What if I told you I know the reason?

**Serah:** That'd be incredible!

**Cheese Head:** Eh, I don't really care much about why, I just need to know how to use them, but I'll listen.

**Chess:** I think you'll be really interested in this, McGuven. So, all of us have abilities that should be entirely impossible for our bodies to do, all of us except Ryven that is.

**Ryven:** I don't need stupid powers to fight people.

**Myrlinda:** You're just totally jealous!

*Chess gets out a book and opens it.*

**Chess:** You see, all of us have these things in our bodies called Genomes. They hold all of our DNA, which is the stuff that makes our bodies look and work the way they do. Sometimes, rare variations of Genomes arise, which give people abnormal and otherwise impossible abilities.

**Cheese Head:** I didn't understand a word you just said.

**Myrlinda:** I think I get it.

**Serah:** That makes sense. In order for our bodies to be different, our entire genetic makeup has to be different to support that.

**Chess:** Exactly! McGuven, the reason I thought you'd be so interested is because very, very rarely, animals have been known to get these altered Genomes themselves, and when that happens, they become sentient. That's why you can talk like the rest of us!

**McGuven:** So that's why... I've always wondered why I was always so different from the others...

**Myrlinda:** What's wrong, McGuven?

**Cheese Head:** It's okay, McGuven. It doesn't matter if you don't fit in with the other birds. You fit in with all of us!

*McGuven starts to tear up.*

**McGuven:** Thank you, Cheese Head. I appreciate it.

**Cheese Head:** Anytime, buddy!

**Ryven:** So does that explain how Cheese Head happened? Did a pile of cheese get a Genome or something?

**Serah:** Hahaha! I don't think so!

**Chess:** Hey, Cheese Head... I've heard rumors about a race of people called the Cheesians. Is that what you are?

**Cheese Head:** Yep.

**Chess:** That's amazing! I heard they went extinct!

*The room falls silent as they all stare at Cheese Head.*

**Cheese Head:** Nope, I'm still here!

**Chess:** So anyway, I've been able to identify all of your Genomes using this book! It's a catalog describing every altered Genome known to humankind! Cheese Head has the Rage Genome, which makes him tremendously powerful when he's upset.

**Cheese Head:** That doesn't sound as cool as Pain Share.

**Chess:** Myrlinda has the Swallow Genome which, as the name implies, allows her to swallow anything that's not much bigger than herself whole and spit it back out like a cannon.

**Myrlinda:** Anything? I never really thought of using it on anything else other than people. That's interesting.

**Chess:** McGuven has the Razor Genome which makes his feathers as sharp as razors and allows him to use them as an endless supply of projectiles. Serah has the Copy Genome which allows her to Copy the physical capabilities of not just other Genomes, but animals and even inanimate object.

**Serah:** Really!? I can Copy inanimate objects!?

**Chess:** Uh huh, and I have the Electricity Genome, and we already know everything that does!

**Serah:** Why didn't a Lieutenant like Barrenson know about these Genomes?

**Chess:** Well, owning this book is actually illegal.

**Serah:** Really? Why?

**Chess:** The government doesn't want anyone doing research of any kind on the Genomes.

Anything relating to them was ordered to be shredded, burned, or discarded. My father passed this book down to me. As far as we know, it's the last of its kind. If anyone's gonna know about the Genomes, it's probably only going to be the Admirals.

**Serah:** That's very interesting... So could I see that for a minute?

**Chess:** Of course!

*Serah takes the book and flips through it for a couple minutes.*

**Serah:** So that means my sisters have these Genomes.

**Chess:** Your sisters have special Genomes? Two blood-relatives getting Genomes is something that's never happened before, so it's assumed to be impossible, of course there's no way to prove it.

**Serah:** None of us are blood-related.

**Chess:** Oh, right! I should've known that, haha...

**Myrlinda:** Ha! So that means I got the Genome and you didn't!

**Ryven:** Shut up, you nitwit!

**Myrlinda:** No, you shut up, loser!

**Ryven:** Dimwit!

**Myrlinda:** You couldn't even come up with another insult without using 'butt' in it, so you're the dimwit!

**Ryven:** Grrrr! Pig!

*Myrlinda gives Ryven a demonic stare.*

**Myrlinda:** You did not just go there... Three.

**Ryven:** You're not gonna scare me into apologizing!

**Myrlinda:** Two!

**Ryven:** Nope, not happening.

**Myrlinda:** One!

*Myrlinda cracks her knuckles and her fist looms over Ryven. Ryven cowers to his knees.*

**Ryven:** Alright, I'm sorry!

**Myrlinda:** I'll forgive you this time, little brother...

**Serah:** So I think I've found them all. Alexia has the Speed Genome, Vereday has the Heavy Genome, Estellia has the Top Genome, and Sephany has the Puppet Genome.

**Cheese Head:** What about Lilly?

**Serah:** Lilly doesn't have one, just like Ryven.

**Ryven:** Stupid powers...

**Myrlinda:** And what about Krogur?

**Serah:** He has the Giant Genome.

**Cheese Head:** I wonder what happened to that guy. I did launch him pretty far.

**Ryven:** Either way, he won't be able to do much in Barogia with all of his cronies and all of his money gone. The government's probably already picked him up because he didn't keep paying



them. They were probably really upset to hear Krogur wouldn't be cashing in our bounties. He probably made a deal with some Lieutenant to give him a certain percent.

**Serah:** That's spot on. He was going to hand 20% to the Lieutenant of the Seas.

**Chess:** Speaking of Lieutenants, Barrenson had the Shadow Genome, and his subordinate Sergeant Major had the Decoy Genome.

**Myrlinda:** I don't think we ever met that guy.

**Ryven:** He must not be that important then.

**McGuven:** I guess not.

*Ryven looks at his swords and then looks at Chess. Suddenly, he gets an idea.*

**Ryven:** I'm gonna be right back!

*Ryven rushes down into the bedroom.*

**McGuven:** I'd like to discuss where we're going next. Last time Serah had already known where the nearest Lieutenant was.

**Serah:** It's funny you mention it, but the Lieutenant of the Seas is actually the nearest one. I bought a world map while I was in town.

*Serah unfolds the map on the table.*

**Serah:** We're in the Desert-Oasis Strip of the world. To the west of here lies our world's ocean, which we call the Ocean Strip. To the west further is the Jungle Strip, the Snow Strip, and the Mountain Strip. Each strip of the world has two Lieutenants residing there, except for the Snow Strip which has tree, and the Ocean Strip which only has one. Very few people live at sea. It's mostly used for trading and transportation. That's why it only has one Lieutenant assigned to it. If we're lucky, we might run into him while we cross the ocean to the Jungle Strip.

**Myrlinda:** What do you mean “if we’re lucky”?

**Serah:** As small as it may be compared to the rest of the world, the ocean is still a vast place.

It’d take months to search it all.

**Myrlinda:** Ugh...

**Cheese Head:** I’m sure we’ll find him in no time.

**Myrlinda:** I wish I had your confidence, captain...

*Ryven returns.*

**Ryven:** Alright, Chess, I need you to do me a favor!

**Chess:** Uh... sure.

**Ryven:** Hold these and charge ‘em up!

*Ryven hands Chess two cylinder objects.*

**Chess:** Okay...

*Chess charges the objects.*

**Chess:** Here you go.

**Ryven:** Now if I just put these in here next to the flame drives.

*Ryven puts the objects into compartments in his sword handles.*

**Serah:** Flame drives?

**Ryven:** It’s what lets me light my swords on fire when I hold them up to the sun.

*Ryven closes the compartments.*

**Ryven:** Here goes nothing!

*Ryven starts rubbing his swords together, causing static electricity until his swords start sparking a constant flow of electricity.*

**Cheese Head:** Whoa! That's awesome!

**McGuven:** Indeed!

**Serah:** That's impressive!

**Chess:** You're telling me.

**Myrlinda:** Yeah, that was pretty smart of you, little brother! Guess you're not so much of a dimwit after all!

**Ryven:** Gee, thanks... Thanks for the help, Chess.

**Chess:** No problem!

**Cheese Head:** Do you guys think we could keep the ship docked here since we're not so close to town? I really want to use the bonfire thing the old man gave us.

**Serah:** Sounds fun!

**McGuven:** I don't see a problem with it!

**Myrlinda:** It's your choice, captain!

*Chess and Ryven grin at Cheese Head.*

**Cheese Head:** Yes! We can roast marshmallows, and stay up late and tell stories, and sing songs, and sleep by the fire! This is going to be amazing!

*The crew disembarks from the ship and starts the bonfire. They all hold marshmallows to the fire while they sit on their blankets.*

**Cheese Head:** So, uh... I can't eat these.

**Ryven:** Well then why did you make them?

**Cheese Head:** Because it's fun.

*Myrlinda grabs Cheese Head's marshmallow.*

**Myrlinda:** Thank you.

**McGuven:** I almost forgot the chocolate and the crackers.

**Myrlinda and Serah:** Chocolate!?

**McGuven:** Yes, so we can make s'mores!

*McGuven flies to the ship and returns with chocolate bars.*

**McGuven:** There's two for everyone! Now let's make some s'mores!

*Myrlinda and Serah instead start eating one of their chocolate bars by themselves.*

**Cheese Head:** Hey! You're supposed to make s'mores out of 'em!

**Myrlinda and Serah:** Fine...

*They both use their remaining chocolate bar to make s'mores.*

**Cheese Head:** Since you both like this stuff so much, you can have one of mine, each!

*They both reach for the chocolate bars, but Cheese Head pulls them away from them.*

**Cheese Head:** But! I'm going to make s'mores out of them before I give them to you.

**Myrlinda:** Okay.

**Serah:** That's fine.

**McGuven:** We can do the same with my s'mores, too!

**Myrlinda and Serah:** Thanks!

*The crew enjoys their s'mores as they tell stories.*

**Ryven:** So Chess, what's your name? I doubt Chess is your real name.

**Chess:** It's short for Chester. Chester Dick Baker!

*Everyone except Cheese Head and McGuven start chuckling.*

**Chess:** What's so funny?

**Myrlinda:** Oh, nothing!

**Chess:** Dick was my father's name, you assholes!

*Cheese Head suddenly stares at Chess in shock.*

**Cheese Head:** Your father wouldn't happen to be Dick Gerald Baker!?

**Chess:** How'd you know?

**Cheese Head:** Your father is a legendary hero in my hometown!

*Cheese Head bows to Chess.*

**Cheese Head:** I am honored to be in the presence of Dick G. Baker's son!

**Serah:** So what did your dad do?

**Chess:** My father was just an ordinary milk man...

*The rest of the crew all fall to the ground in shock of Cheese Head celebrating a milk man as a legendary hero.*

**Cheese Head:** Just an ordinary milk man!? Nonsense! That man delivered milk to everyone in my village, filling it with the life and nutrients it needed! My townspeople will forever be in debt to the legendary man, Dick Gerald Baker!

**Chess:** You know, it all makes sense now.

**Cheese Head:** Huh?

**Chess:** My dad always used to tell me stories about how he went out to this village filled with people made of cheese. He said they were the nicest people he ever met, and they treated him like a hero. I always found that story hard to swallow, but what do you know, it's true. Hehe!

*Cheese Head and Chess tap their marshmallow sticks together and grin at each other.*

**Ryven:** So how the hell do you talk? Where does the sound come from?

**Cheese Head:** Hell if I know.

**Ryven and Myrlinda:** You mean you don't know!?

**Ryven:** He doesn't even have a mouth...

**Myrlinda:** Just don't question it...

*Serah gets out some books to read.*

**Myrlinda:** What are those?

**Serah:** Books about the human body, diseases, general health, that kinda stuff. I was looking for these when I just happened to find that world map.

**Myrlinda:** That's right! Don't you want to be a doctor?

**Serah:** Yes. I'm taking up an old passion. Maybe it'll come in handy someday.

**Myrlinda:** I'm sure it will! We sure seem to get bruised up a lot!

**Serah:** Yeah, we sure do!

**Ryven:** So what's gonna happen to Barrenson now?

**Serah:** The same thing that happens to any soldier who is defeated in battle. They're considered no longer of use to the government and discharged.

**Cheese Head:** Welp, it looks like we know what happened to that Snare guy, too!

**Ryven:** And Corporal Conando.

**McGuven:** And Sergeant Gerro.

**Myrlinda:** And that filthy slob, Corporal Sorino. Did I ever mention he tasted totally awful?

Like, has he ever heard of showering!?

*The crew laughs, eats and talks until they all eventually start to go to sleep. Serah notices*

*Myrlinda is asleep already and she kisses her on the forehead, and then wraps herself in her own*

*blanket.*

**Serah:** (It's finally over... and it's all thanks to my amazing friends.)

*Serah falls asleep as the bonfire dies out. Meanwhile, three Lieutenants discuss the Cheese Heads' bounties.*

**Lieutenant 1:** So here we are again, huh? Heard the news?

**Lieutenant 2:** Barrenson was a pathetic excuse for a Lieutenant. His defeat isn't too much of a surprise.

**Lieutenant 3:** All of the Cheese Head's bounties have been raised and there are two additional crewmembers that have been assigned bounties.

*Lieutenant 3 posts the bounties as he discusses them.*

**Lieutenant 3:** Rattel Serah is worth 160,000. She alone defeated and nearly killed Lieutenant Barrenson and his wife all on her own. She used to work for King Krogur before he fell to Cheese Head. She has the ability to Copy other people's powers, but can only hold one at a time, and since she's traveling with the Cheese Heads, she'll have access to all of their abilities. This makes us consider her very dangerous.

**Lieutenant 1:** That's absolutely terrifying! Defeating a Lieutenant and having access to her own personal pool of powers! No wonder the bounty is so high!

**Lieutenant 3:** Chester D. Baker is worth 80,000. He refers to himself as Chess and has the ability to create and control electric currents through the air. At lower levels of voltage, you won't even see his attack coming. So far, he hasn't defeated any of our higher-ranking soldiers, but being a former Sergeant, we know just how powerful he can be.

**Lieutenant 1:** An attack you can't even see coming? That makes him a huge risk to our weaker

forces that can't handle a little shock.

**Lieutenant 3:** All the previous members of the Cheese Head crew have had their bounties raised by 50,000. Together they defeated every member of Krogur Industries and toppled the facility to the ground. Unfortunately we weren't able to increase their bounties for these events because it'd cause commotion amongst the people, but now the defeat of Lieutenant Barrenson is the perfect excuse to raise their bounties. However, Cheese Head alone defeated King Krogur, a man whom we considered to be much stronger than Lieutenant Barrenson, so we have raised his bounty by 100,000 instead. This now makes the Cheese Heads' total bounty add up to 714,000 maroons.

**Lieutenant 1:** It's quite incredible that they've gotten this far! If something isn't done about them soon, they could become a real problem for the United World Government!

*The next day the Cheese Heads pack up.*

**Cheese Head:** Alright, Chess. Pick a bed.

*Chess picks a bed, and hangs up the picture from last night, and a picture of himself at the restaurant with the criminals, and a picture of himself as a kid with his dad standing over him, and his grandfather standing over his father. Serah walks in and puts up her picture from last night, and a picture of Maryssa. Everyone returns to the deck as Hegru flies in.*

**Myrlinda:** Hey, guys! Hegru's back!

*They walk out to the deck as Hegru gives one letter to Myrlinda, Ryven, Serah, and Cheese Head each. Hegru also hands a newspaper to Cheese Head.*

**Myrlinda:** Who sent you a letter, Cheese Head?

**Cheese Head:** It's the old man!

*They all sit down and read their letters.*



**Kobayoto's letter:** (Hello, young one! I'm glad to see Hegru is being cared for very well. I want you to know that the girls work for the city now. They've been well accepted under my watch and leadership. They want you to know they're very thankful to you. I wanted to let you know I filled the closet in the back of the bedroom with lots of useful things. I have no use for them, but I'm sure a bunch of young partygoers like yourselves will get much enjoyment from them. Thank you again for all you have done for the people of this town. Continue to strive toward your dream for world peace!)

*Cheese Head begins to write a response while Myrlinda reads her letter.*

**Robesto's letter:** (Dear Myrlinda, I am so very glad to hear that you're doing well! Cheese Head seems stronger and stronger the farther he ventures into the world. Your brother doesn't show it much, but he really is enjoying himself out there more than ever. If I'm not mistaken, it sounds like you've got butterflies in your stomach. I always thought you liked girls a lot more than you liked boys. When I met your mother, sometimes I got so nervous that I couldn't even speak! All you have to do is relax and be yourself, and I'm sure you'll be able to have a fine relationship with her! Hope that helps! I love you, kiddo!)

*They all write responses to the letters they got.*

**Myrlinda:** So what did the mayor say?

**Cheese Head:** He just wanted to thank me and tell me how the girls are doing. I thanked him for all the stuff he gave us.

**Myrlinda:** I told dad about Chess and our adventure here in Gregoria, and where we were headed next.

**Serah:** I told my sisters about our trip to Gregoria as well.

**Myrlinda:** What did you talk to dad about, Ryven?

**Ryven:** I just asked him how the elections were going and stuff. He says he won. I told him I was happy for him.

**Myrlinda:** Hey, Cheese Head, is that the newspaper?

**Cheese Head:** Oh, sure is! Let's see if there's anything good in it! It's from today, after all!

*Cheese Head reads the paper.*

**Cheese Head:** Lieutenant Down at Gregoria! Cheese Head Rebels Cause Panic!

**Serah:** I like it.

**Cheese Head:** Aw yeah! There's more bounties in here, guys!

**Chess:** Sweet!

*Cheese Head puts the bounties on the deck floor and flips them over one at a time.*

**Cheese Head:** "Chess", Chester D. Baker, worth 80,000 maroons.

**Myrlinda:** That's higher than all of our bounties except Cheese Head's!

**Chess:** Alright! That's amazing.

**Cheese Head:** Rattel Serah, worth 160,000 maroons.

**Myrlinda, Ryven, and McGuven:** WHAT!?

**Myrlinda:** That's more than Cheese Head's!

**Serah:** Incredible... I'm impressed with myself.

**Cheese Head:** "Sentient Bird" McGuven, worth 100,000 maroons.

**Chess:** Looks like you beat me.

**McGuven:** My bounty doubled!

**Cheese Head:** Astilio Ryven, worth 75,000 maroons.

**Ryven:** Alright, my bounty went up!

**Cheese Head:** Astilio Myrlinda, worth 79,000 maroons.

**Myrlinda:** Yes! Ha! Your bounty is the smallest, Ryven!

**Ryven:** Yeah, but yours is only bigger by a hair!

**Myrlinda:** Well my bounty is gonna be the biggest on the crew next to Cheese Head's!

**Ryven:** Yeah, alright! Just don't cry when I have the second-highest bounty!

**Serah:** What a competition. They're both aiming for second place.

**Cheese Head:** Since when do you care about your bounty, Myrlinda?

**Myrlinda:** Since I decided I was gonna get strong, of course! My bounty shows how strong I get!

**Cheese Head:** I see. For me my bounty is like getting closer and closer to my dream! Speaking of which...

*Cheese Head flips over the last paper.*

**Cheese Head:** Cheese Head, worth...

**All:** 200,000 MAROONS!?

**Cheese Head:** Yes! It totally doubled!

**Serah:** I don't think Krogur's stolen that much money in his entire lifetime!

**Myrlinda:** I don't think all the money all of our families ever had combined adds up to that!

**Cheese Head:** Haha! I'm a man worth 200,000!

**Serah:** Altogether, our entire crew is worth 714,000!

**Ryven:** Does that much money even exist?

**McGuven:** Good question...

**Chess:** The government probably has that much money. They've been hoarding it for years after all.

**Serah:** Maybe so... Cheese Head, if you don't mind, I need to say goodbye to someone before I leave.

**Cheese Head:** Take all the time you need. We'll set off once you're back.

**Serah:** Thank you.

*Serah visits the graveyard.*

**Serah:** Hey, dad. Hey, doctor.

*Serah sighs.*

**Serah:** It's finally all over with. My friends and I finally gave them what they had coming. I've never been so happy in my entire life. They're the family I've always dreamed of. I'm so blessed to get to spend every day with them. I miss all of my sisters, but it's worth it knowing I'll be able to go back to them some day. Now I can finally move on with my life. If it weren't for Cheese Head and all of our friends, I don't know if I'd have ever been able to get here.

*Serah leaves more flowers on the graves.*

**Serah:** Well, I have to go now. I'm keeping my crew waiting. As soon as I get aboard the ship, we're taking off for the seas. I love you both so much, and now you can both finally rest in peace.

*Serah returns to the ship.*

**Cheese Head:** Let's finally get this thing started! To the ocean!

**All:** Yeah!

*The ship starts flying.*

**Serah:** (I almost can't believe it... but here I am.)

*Serah walks up to the crew and puts her arms around them as the ship flies towards the horizon.*